

THE INCREDIBLE HULK



JOHNSON
EARLS
KLEIN
WILSON

CITY OF IDOLS

MARVEL

THE INCREDIBLE HULK

City of Idols



Led by a primordial being called Eldest, monsters all over the world are hunting the Hulk to use him to awaken an entity known as the Mother of Horrors. One such monster trapped the soul of Hulk's traveling companion, teenage runaway Charlie, in a magical figurine! To restore Charlie to living flesh, Hulk is headed to the city of Las Vegas where he is told a power exists that can accomplish this feat. But Bruce learns a terrifying truth while trapped within his own mind, the Hulkscape—the only being capable of saving Charlie is Eldest itself. The monster's price? Bruce must betray the Hulk once and for all!

HULK CREATED BY **STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY**

COLLECTION EDITOR **DANIEL KIRCHHOFFER**

TALENT RELATIONS SPECIALIST **LISA MONTALBANO**

DIRECTOR, PRODUCTION & SPECIAL PROJECTS **JENNIFER GRÜN WALD**

VP, PRODUCTION & SPECIAL PROJECTS **JEFF YOUNGQUIST**

BOOK DESIGNER **YOUSSEF BAYOR**

MANAGER & SENIOR DESIGNER **ADAM DEL RE**

LEAD DESIGNER **JAY BOWEN**

VP, PRINT & DIGITAL PUBLISHING **DAVID GABRIEL**

SR. MANAGER, DIGITAL **TIM SMITH 3**

DIGITAL PRODUCTION **JASMINE ALVAREZ & RACHEL YOUNG**

EDITOR IN CHIEF **C.B. CEBULSKI**

BRUCE BANNER IS A MAN CONSTANTLY AT WAR WITH HIMSELF, FOR WITHIN HIM IS THE GREEN, RAGE-FUELED, GAMMA-POWERED FORCE OF NATURE KNOWN AS THE HULK. NOW THE HULK'S RAGE IS POINTED AT BRUCE, HUNGRY TO TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR SHARED BODY ONCE AND FOR ALL. BRUCE LIVES A LIFE ON THE RUN TO PROTECT THE REST OF THE WORLD FROM...

THE INCREDIBLE HULK

City of Idols

Phillip Kennedy Johnson
WRITER

Danny Earls (#15-16, #18) &
Nic Klein (#17-19)
ARTISTS

Matthew Wilson WITH
Dee Cunniffe (#16) & Nic Klein (#17)
COLOR ARTISTS

FOUL-WEATHER FRIENDS
Greg Pak
WRITER

Lan Medina
ARTIST

Romulo Fajardo Jr.
COLOR ARTIST

NIGHT ETERNAL
Torunn Grønbekk
WRITER

Lynne Yoshii
ARTIST

Fer Sifuentes-Sujo
COLOR ARTIST

PRISONS
Benjamin Percy
WRITER
Geoff Shaw
ARTIST
Bryan Valenza
COLOR ARTIST

Mikey J. Basso
ASSISTANT EDITOR
Danny Khazem Mark Paniccia
ASSOCIATE EDITOR EDITOR

VC's Cory Petit
LETTERER

Nic Klein
COVER ART

MR Daniel &
Kaeden McGahey
ASSISTANT EDITORS

Tom Groneman
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Jordan D. White
EDITOR

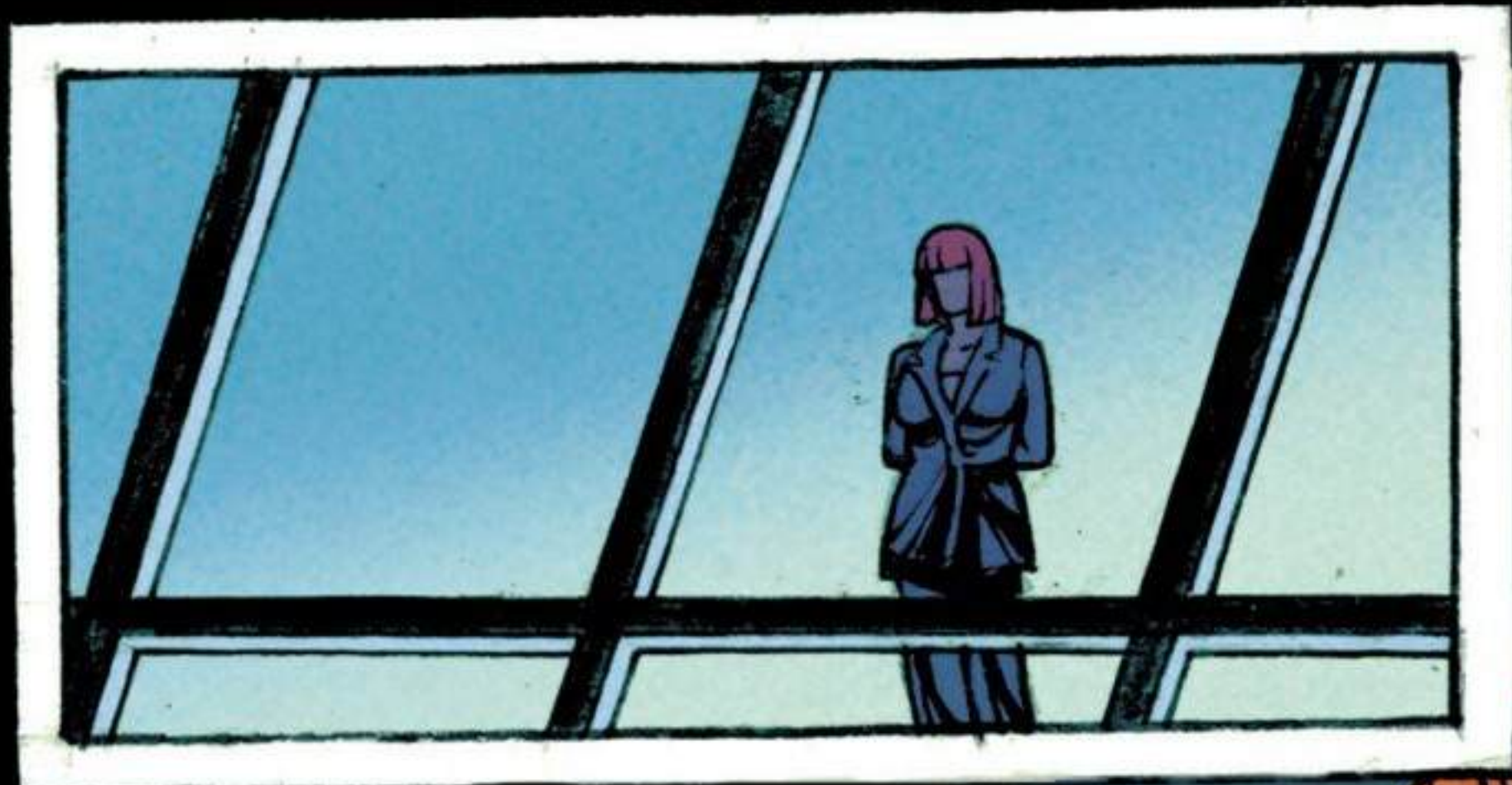


I'M COMING,
MOTHER.

THE KEY TO
YOUR PRISON
IS AT HAND...

...AND SOON,
ALL WILL BE SET
TO RIGHTS.





ELDEST?

YES,
PRETTY
ONE?

WHAT DO
YOU SEE IN
THE POOL?
MAY I...

...M-MIGHT
I HAVE A
LOOK?

WOULD THAT
YOU COULD, MY
DARLING. TO DIVINE
THE SANGUINE POOL...
I'M AFRAID IT WOULD
HARM YOU.

BUT I WILL
TELL YOU WHAT
I SEE, IF IT
PLEASES YOU?

OH YES,
ELDEST. I
WOULD LIKE
THAT VERY
MUCH.

I SEE THE
FRACTURED
SON...THE ONE
THIS WORLD
NAMES HULK.

HE WALKS
NORTH ACROSS
THE DESERT,
COMING TO US
WITH ALL
HASTE.



HE CARRIES THE
SOUL OF HIS COMPANION,
PRESERVED IN YOUTH AS SHE
WAS BY GOOD NEPHELE.

HIS CARE
FOR THE GIRL WILL
BE HIS UNDOING, AND
OUR MOTHER'S
SALVATION.

HOW WILL
THE STORY END,
ELDEST?



NO
STORY ENDS,
SILLY DUCK. THERE
IS BUT ONE STORY,
AND IT GOES ON
FOREVER AND
EVER.

"THIS IS NOT THE FIRST
FRACTURED SON I HAVE
FACED IN MY TIME.



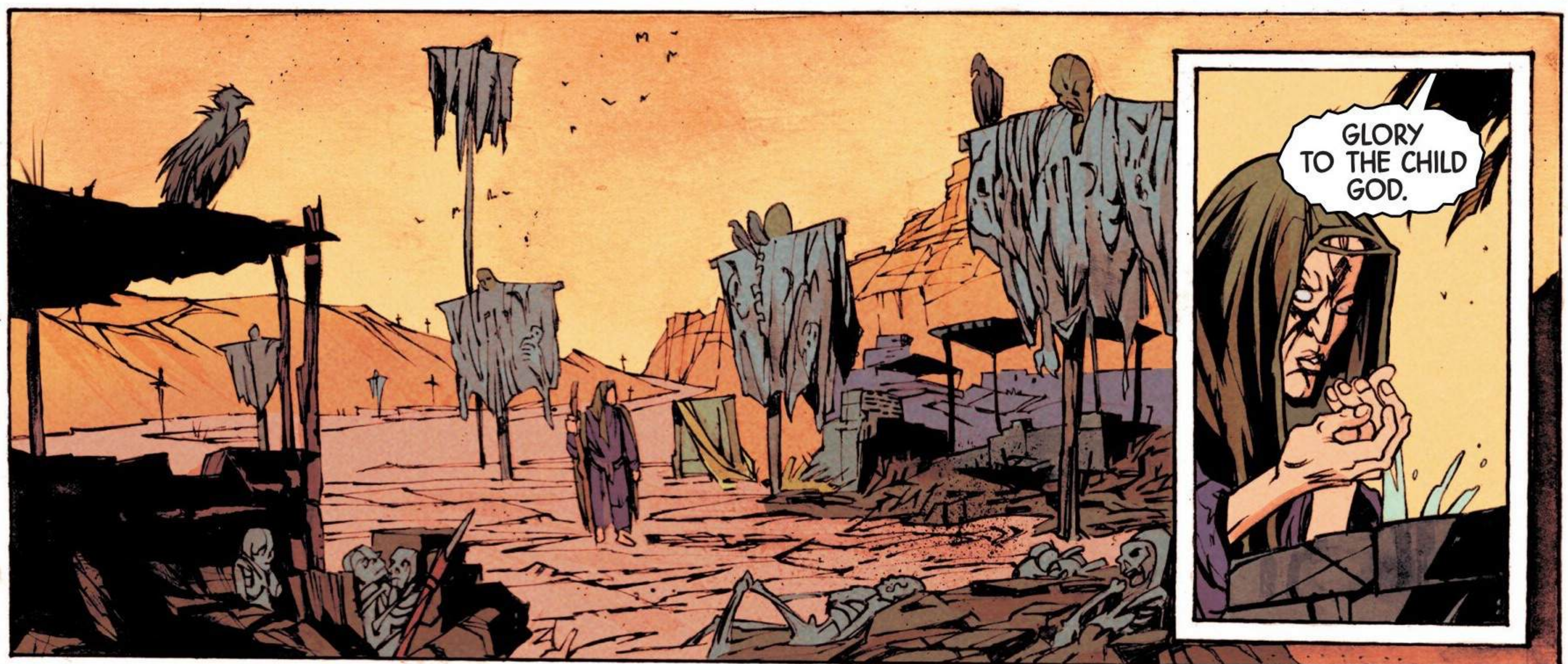
"ANOTHER ONCE CROSSED
A DESERT, AND PUT
HIMSELF IN MY PATH.

"THIS ONE WILL
FARE NO BETTER
THAN HE."

ASSYRIA.
3,600 YEARS AGO.



*TRANSLATED FROM AKKADIAN.





IS IT THE
CARRION BIRD WHO
SPEAKS OR THE DEAD?
OR DOES THE DESERT
DRIVE ME TO
MADNESS?

ALL, AND
NONE.

ON THE
ROAD TO THE
FALLEN CITY,
ALL THINGS PRAISE
THE CHILD
GOD.

PRAY TO HER,
OR BE DAMNED
FORTHWITH.

I PRAY TO
THE GOD WHO
ANSWERS.

AND
SO, TO NONE.



SHYHHHHHHH



BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM



CRASH

NO!
PLEASE!!!

SKREEEEEEEE



I NEVER
THOUGHT WE'D
FIND MORE SO
NEAR THE
CITY.

THERE'S
NO MEAT ON
'EM. FIT ONLY
FOR THE CHILD
GOD'S
MINES.

FAH. SHE'LL
NOT GET TWENTY
BREATHS OUT OF
'EM BEFORE
THEY--



PRAISE
HER. HERE'S
ANOTHER
ONE.

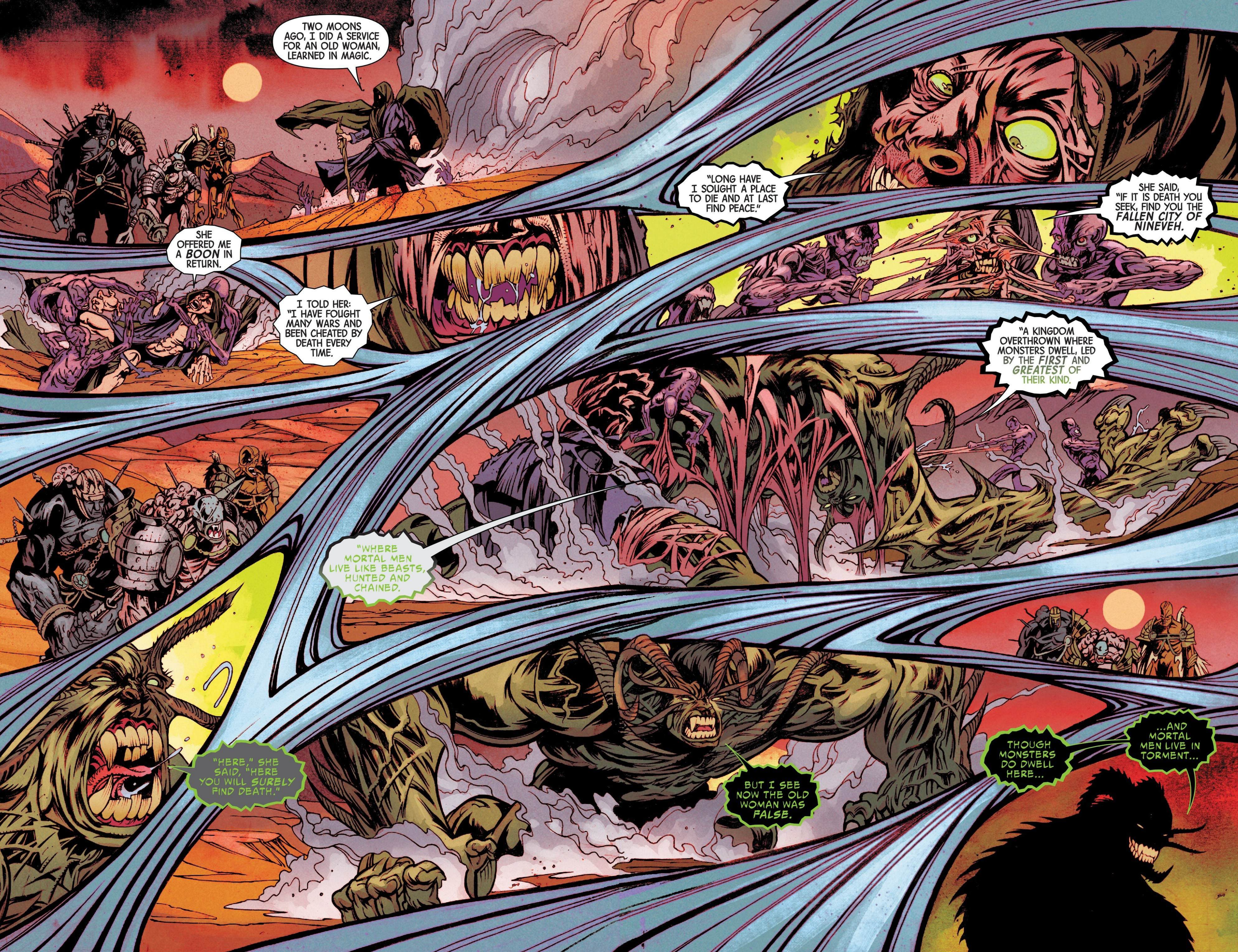
HE'S
NAUGHT BUT
BONES...

...BUT I'LL
HAVE HIS HIDE,
ANYWAY.



IT SEEMS
THE STORIES
WERE FALSE.

EHP
WHAT
STORIES?



TWO MOONS
AGO, I DID A SERVICE
FOR AN OLD WOMAN,
LEARNED IN MAGIC.

SHE
OFFERED ME
A **BOON** IN
RETURN.

I TOLD HER:
"I HAVE FOUGHT
MANY WARS AND
BEEN CHEATED BY
DEATH EVERY
TIME.

"LONG HAVE
I SOUGHT A PLACE
TO DIE AND AT LAST
FIND PEACE."

SHE SAID,
"IF IT IS DEATH YOU
SEEK, FIND YOU THE
FALLEN CITY OF
NINEVEH.

"A KINGDOM
OVERTHROWN WHERE
MONSTERS DWELL, LED
BY THE **FIRST** AND
GREATEST OF
THEIR KIND.

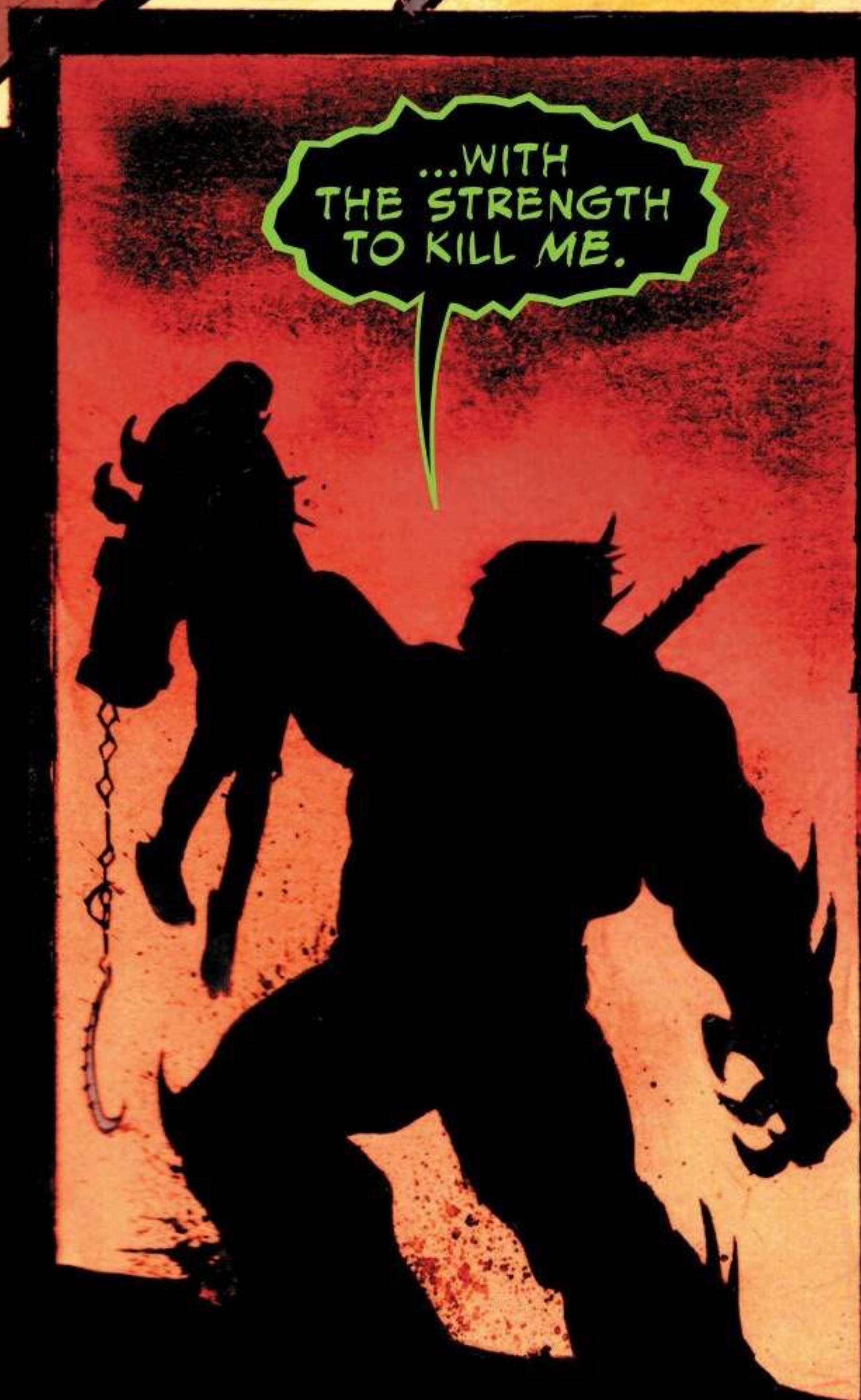
"WHERE
MORTAL MEN
LIVE LIKE BEASTS,
HUNTED AND
CHAINED.

"HERE," SHE
SAID, "HERE
YOU WILL SURELY
FIND DEATH."

BUT I SEE
NOW THE OLD
WOMAN WAS
FALSE.

THOUGH
MONSTERS
DO DWELL
HERE...

...AND
MORTAL
MEN LIVE IN
TORMENT...





M-MERCY,
BROTHER.
WE KNEW
NOT THAT YOU
WERE--

SCRUNNCH

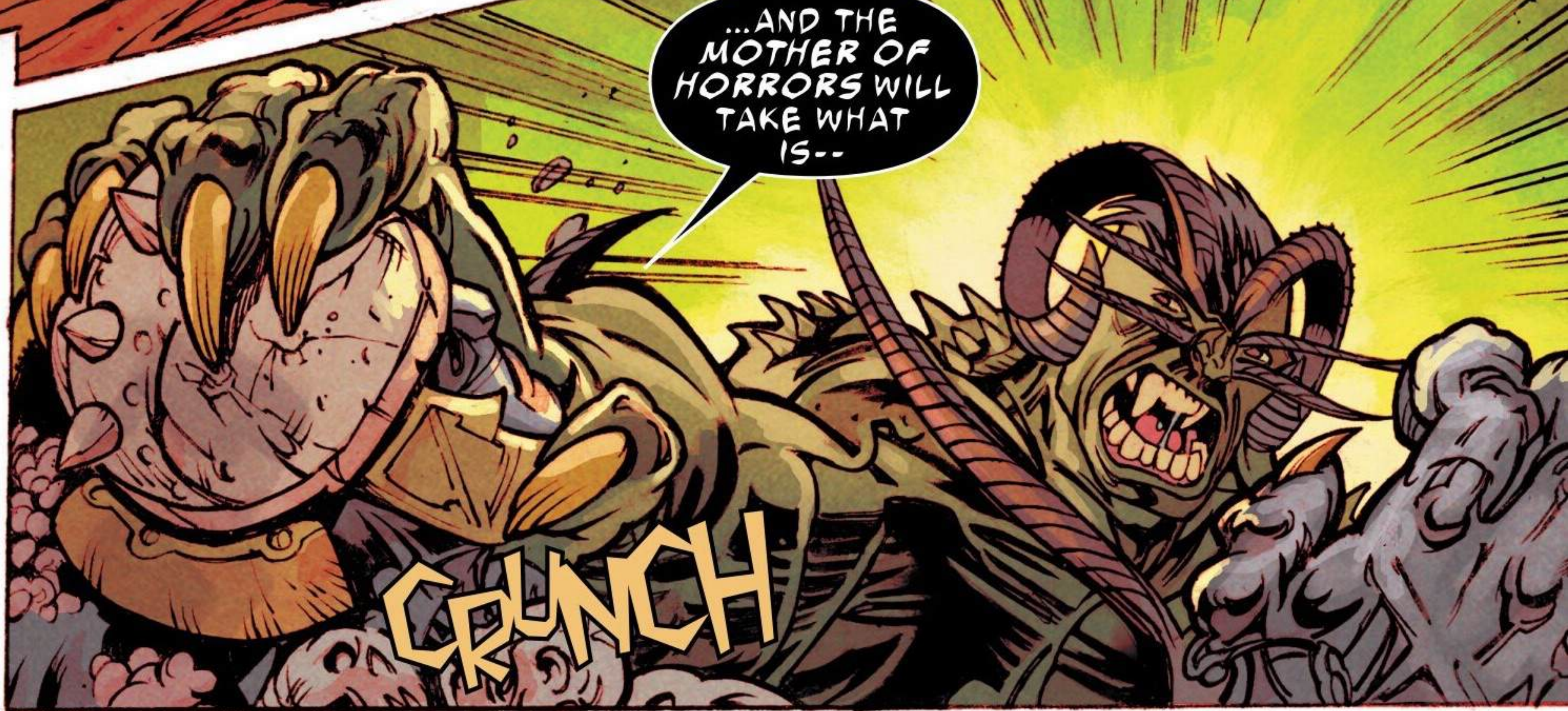


I KNOW WHO YOU ARE!

WHAAM



OUR ELDEST WILL AVENGE US...



...AND THE MOTHER OF HORRORS WILL TAKE WHAT IS--

CRUNCH



SHRRRIIIPPP



FWUMP



THIS IS
WHERE WE
LIVE NOW.

IT'S NOT SAFE
THIS CLOSE TO THE
FALLEN CITY, BUT TO RUN
IS WORSE. BEASTS WATCH
THE MOUNTAINS, AND
THE RIVER ALSO.



WHAT
HAPPENED
HERE?

THEY CAME,
AND NOW NINEVEH
IS CURSED. THERE IS
LITTLE ELSE TO
TELL.

IT IS FILLED
WITH ALL MANNER
OF BEASTS AND FOUL
THINGS, AND THE
CHILD GOD THEY
FOLLOW.



THEY SWEEPED INTO THE CITY
AT NIGHT, KILLED THE KING
AND ALL HIS SOLDIERS. EACH
NIGHT **MORE** GATHER, AND
COME MORNING THEIR
NUMBERS ARE
GREATER.



SOMEDAY THEY WILL OVERRUN
ALL THE WORLD. I ONLY
PRAY IT HAPPENS AFTER
THE TIME OF MY
CHILDREN.

THEIR "CHILD
GOD" IS **NOT** A CHILD,
WHATEVER ELSE IT MAY
BE. IT WEARS A YOUNG
GIRL'S **SKIN** BECAUSE
IT **AMUSES** IT
TO DO SO.

THAT THING
IS AS MUCH A
MONSTER AS
Y--





AS...
AS MUCH
AS...

...TH-THOSE
OTHERS.



I GO TO
THE FALLEN CITY.
FIND ANOTHER
PLACE TO--

I KNOW
WHO YOU
ARE.



YOU ARE
ENKIDU. THE
BULL-MAN OF AKKADIA,
WHO HAS FOUGHT
ALONGSIDE GREAT
HEROES.

WHY COME
HERE? JUST TO
DIE, TRULY?



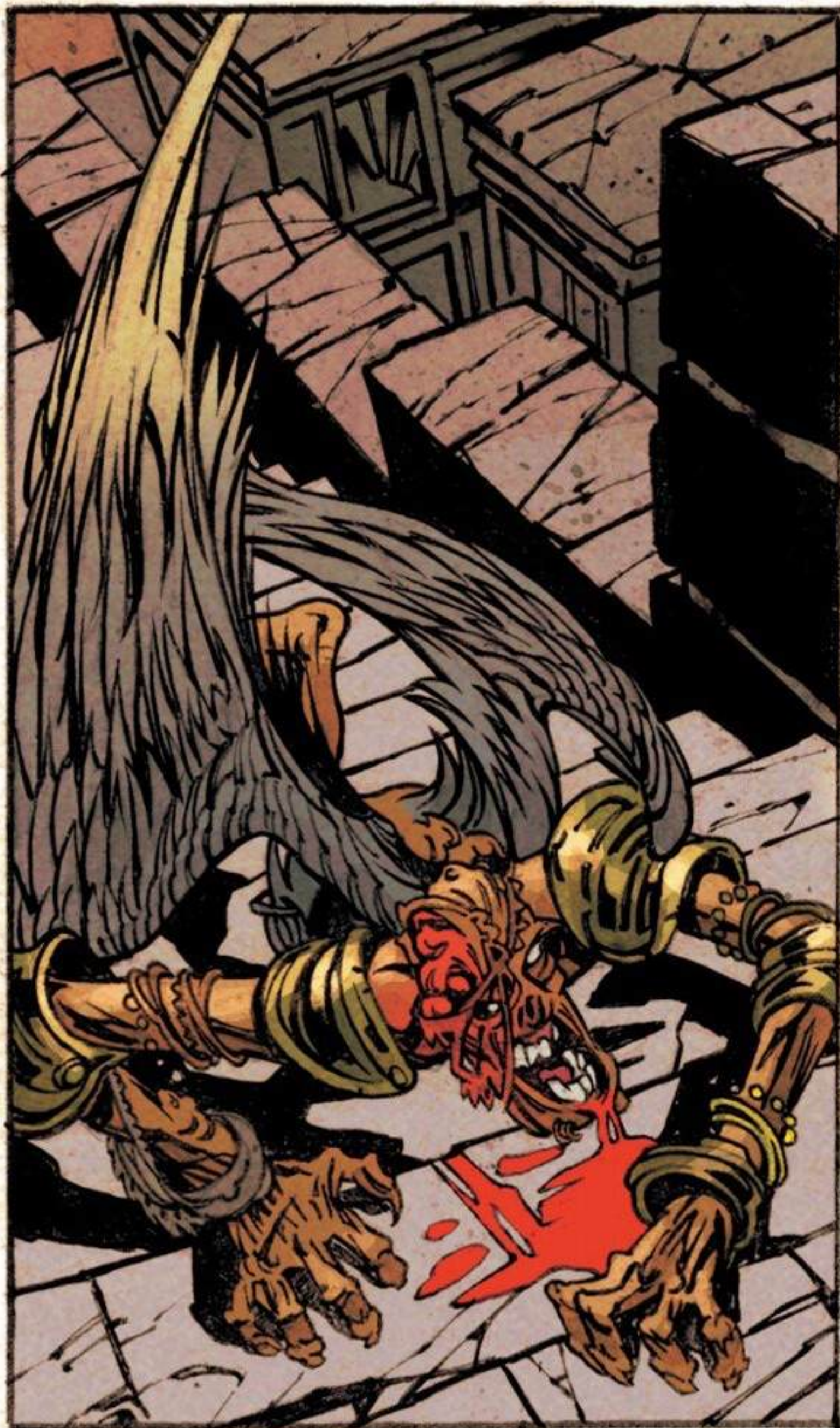
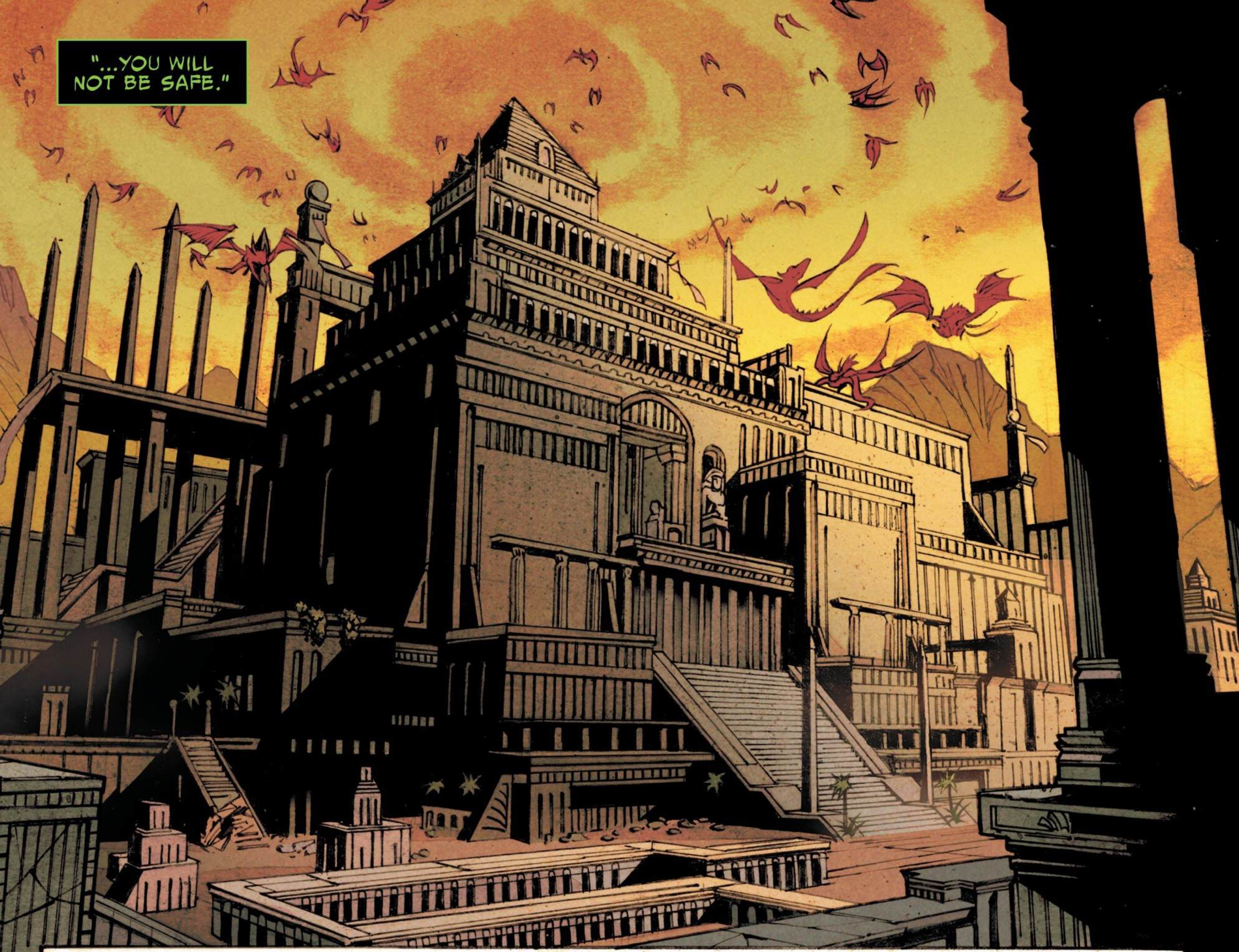
GRRAAAAAHHH
ENKIDU SMASH!

LEAVE THIS
PLACE.

WHATEVER
HAPPENS
TOMORROW...



"...YOU WILL
NOT BE SAFE."



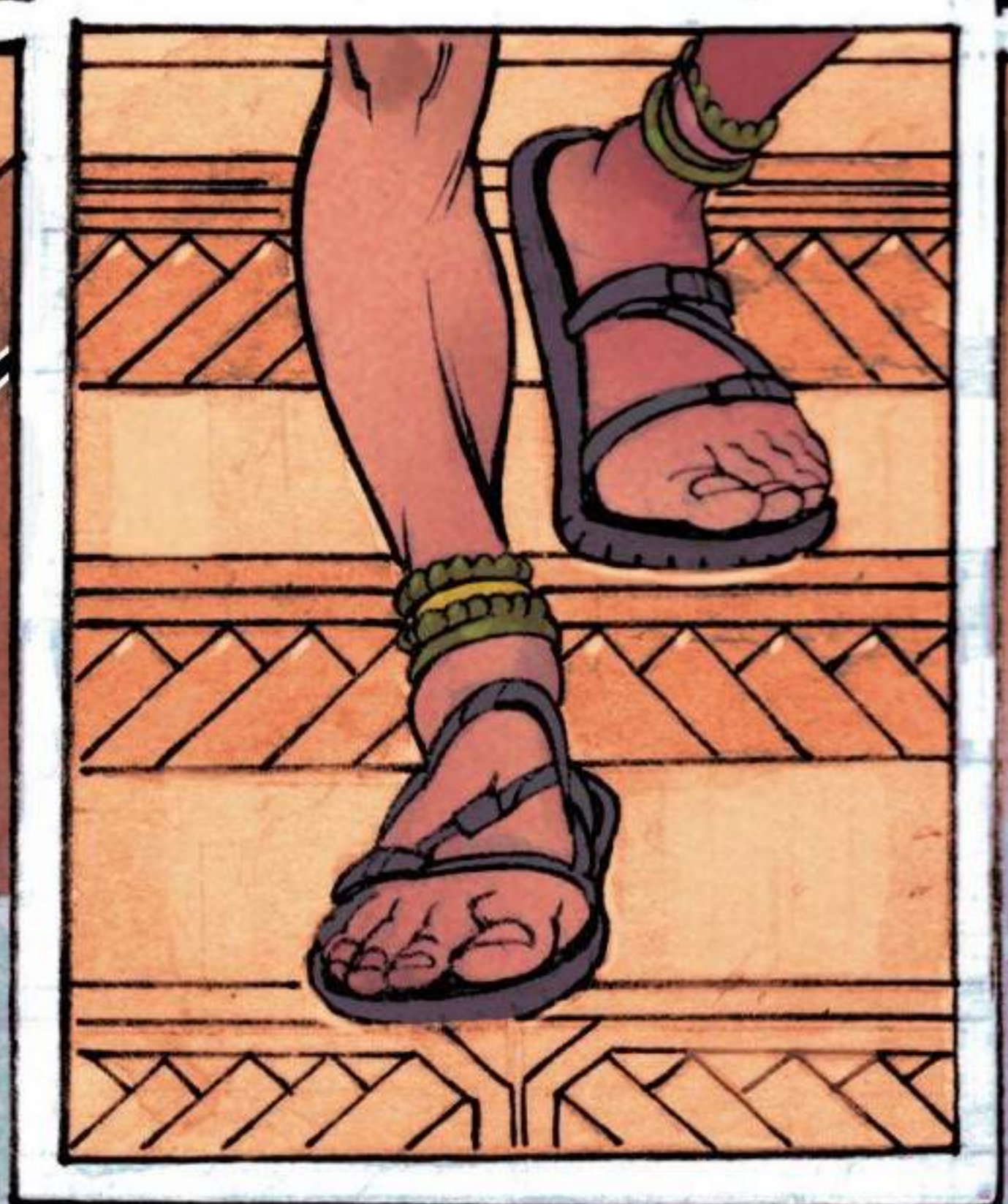
HRRNNNNNK

RRRRRRMMMMBBBBBLLL



I CHOSE
WELL IN YOU,
CHARRUK.

BOLD
INDEED IS THE
SERVANT...





HOW
CAME YOU
BY THESE
WOUNDS?

TRAVELS...
IN THE GUISE
OF...AN OLD
BEGGAR...



...BUT...
POSSESSES...
GREAT
STRENGTH.



HIS FLESH
DREW ITS POWER...
FROM AN EMERALD-
GREEN FLAME.

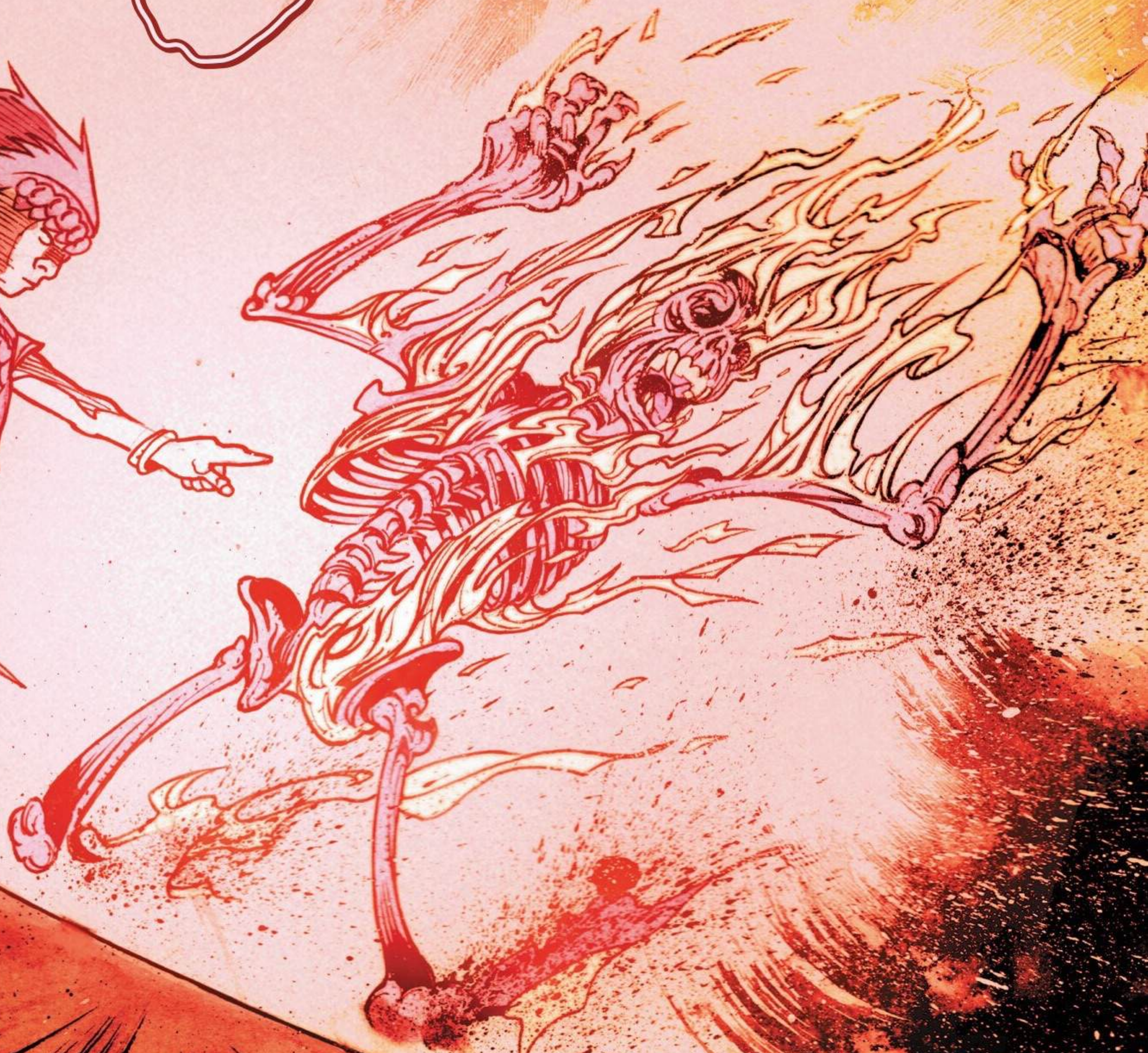
ELDEST...
IT WAS THE
LIGHT...



...OF
THE GREEN
DOOR.



FWOOOON



KA-CLACK

GLACK



GLACK TU

ELDEST...
IF ONE TRULY
WALKS THE EARTH
WITH THE POWER OF
THE GREEN DOOR...
COULD IT BE THE
ENEMY HIMSELF,
COME TO PUNISH
US?

COULD
IT BE THE
ONE BELOW
ALL?



THE ONE
BELOW ALL
HOWLS THROUGH
MANY MOUTHS.
HE BREAKS WITH
MANY HANDS.

HE DOES
NOT DIRTY HIS
FEET WITH THE
DUST OF THE EARTH.
FOR NOW, WE
ARE BENEATH
HIS NOTICE.



BUT IF
CHARRUK
SPOKE TRULY...
IF THE POWER OF
THE ONE BELOW
ALL HAS BEEN
KINDLED IN THE
FLESH OF
ANOTHER...



...THEN WE
MAY HAVE THE
POWER TO UNDO
WHAT WAS
DONE.

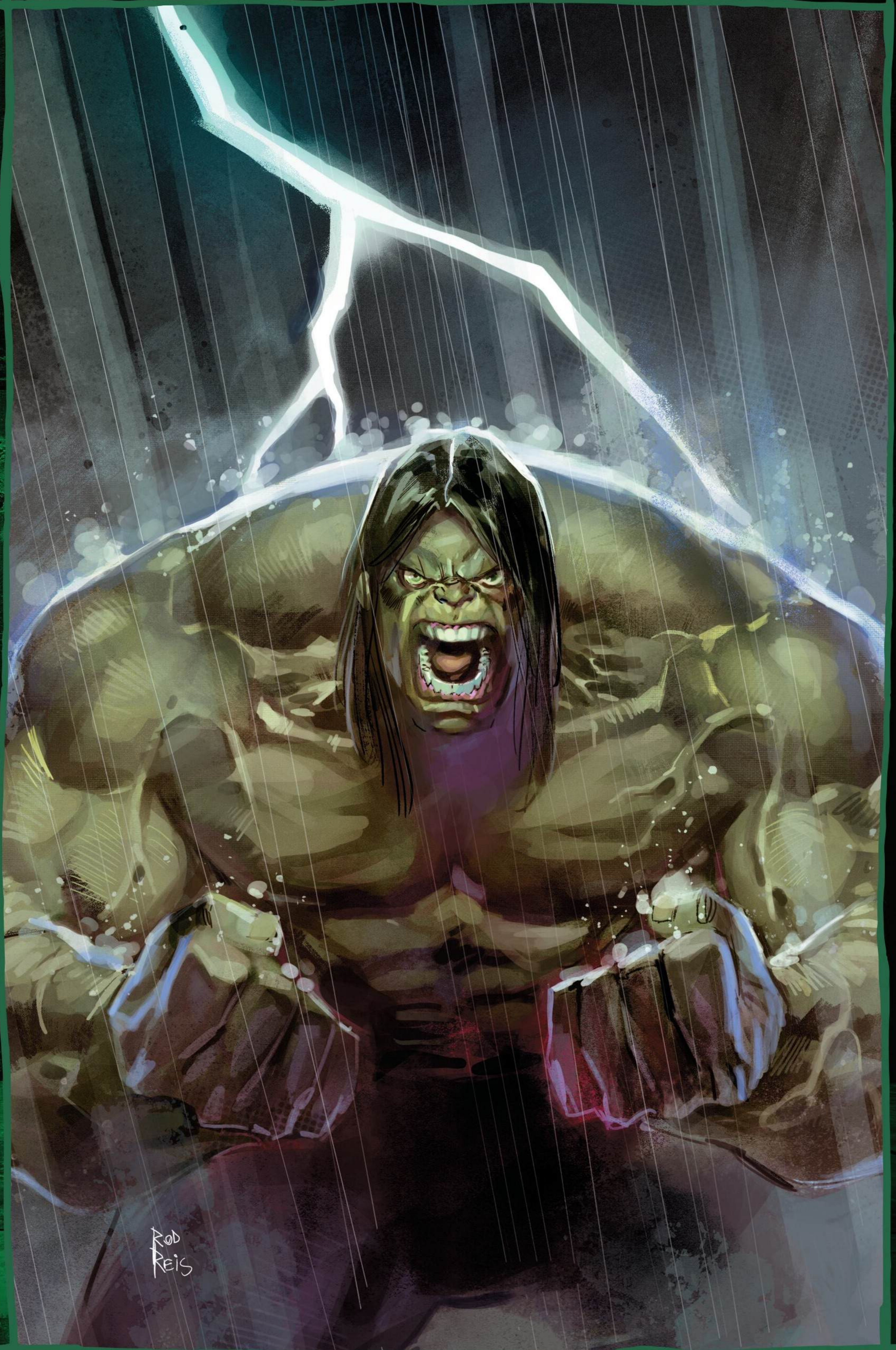


"WE MAY GAIN THE
POWER TO FREE THE
MOTHER OF HORRORS..."



"...AND SET THE
EARTH TO RIGHTS."



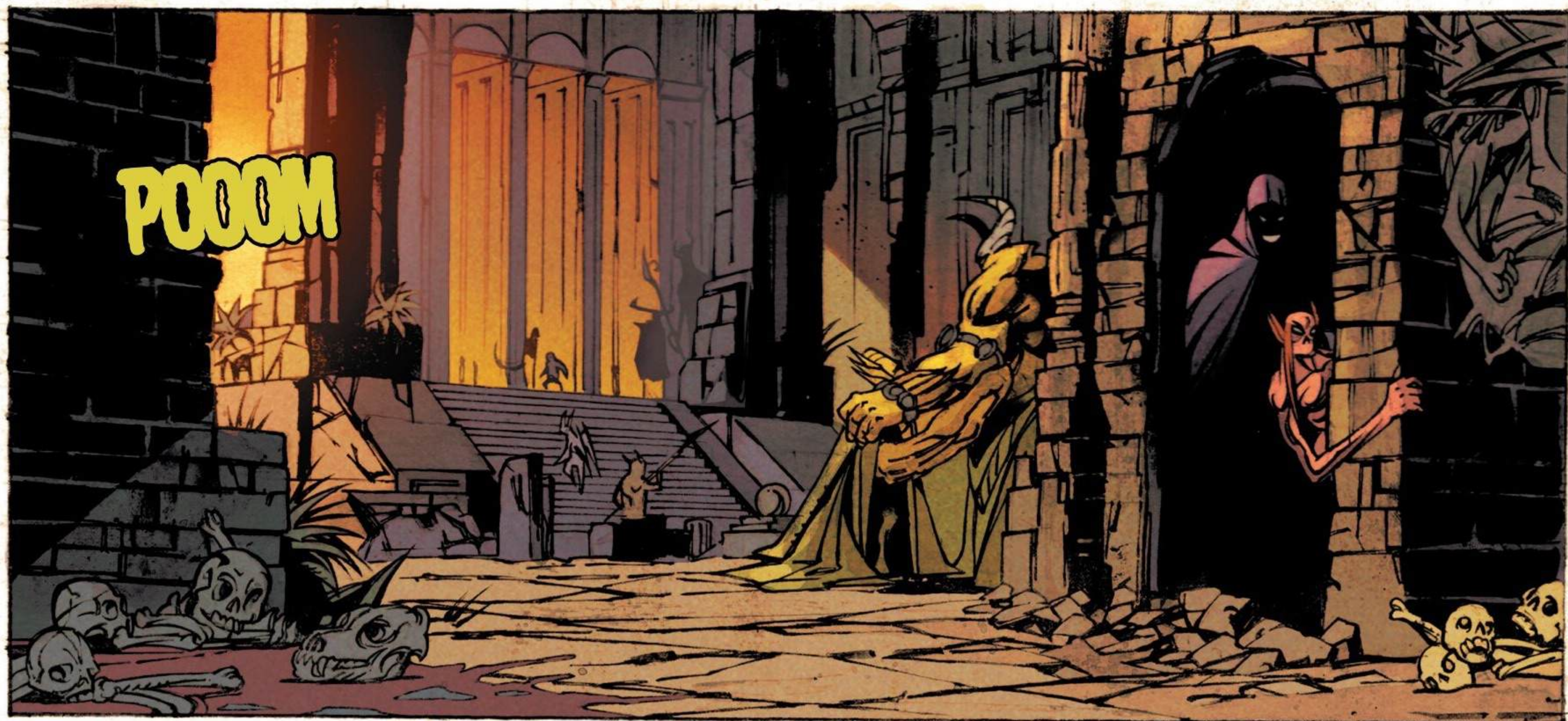
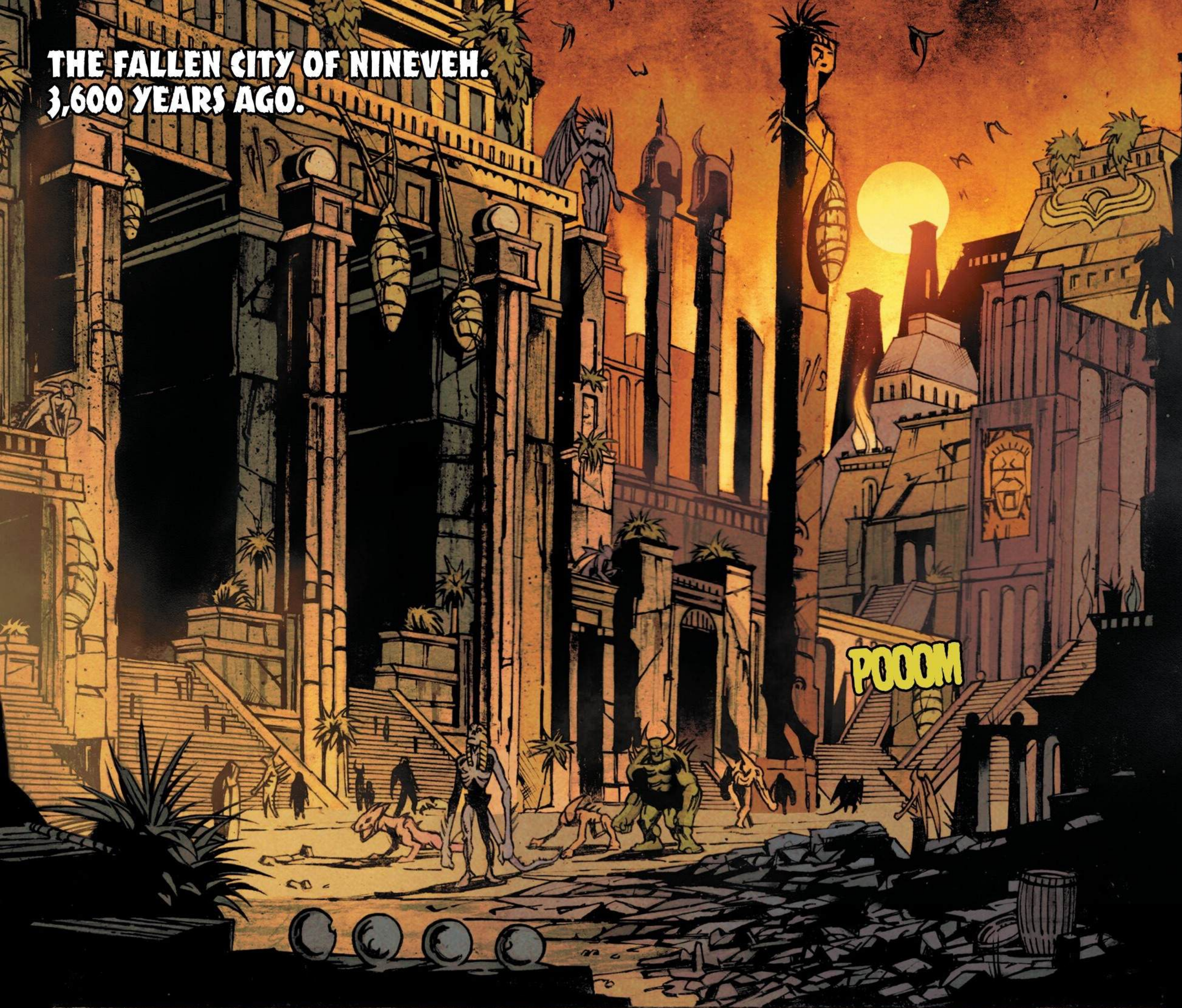


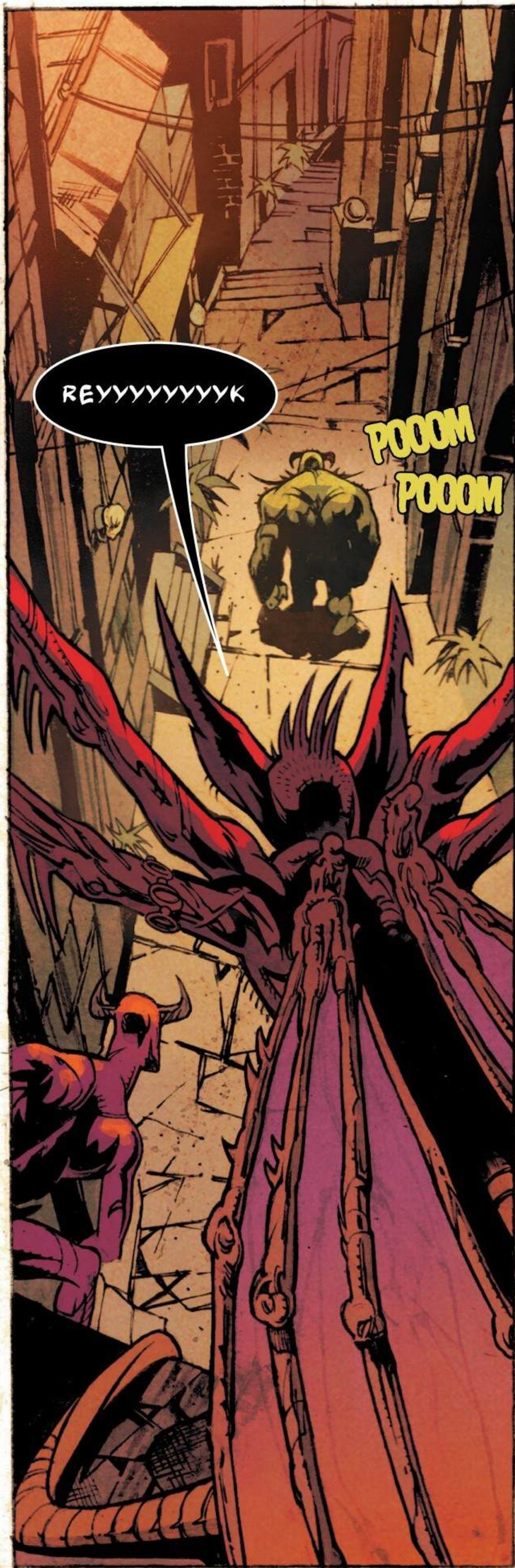
ROD
REIS

INCREDIBLE HULK #15 VARIANT BY ROD REIS



THE FALLEN CITY OF NINEVEH.
3,600 YEARS AGO.





GLORY
TO THE CHILD
GOD.

THESE
CATTLE AIN'T
FOR SELLING.

NO.

I WILL
TAKE THEM
WHEN YOU
ARE DEAD.

GORLLL

BOOM

BOOM

GRAAGH!



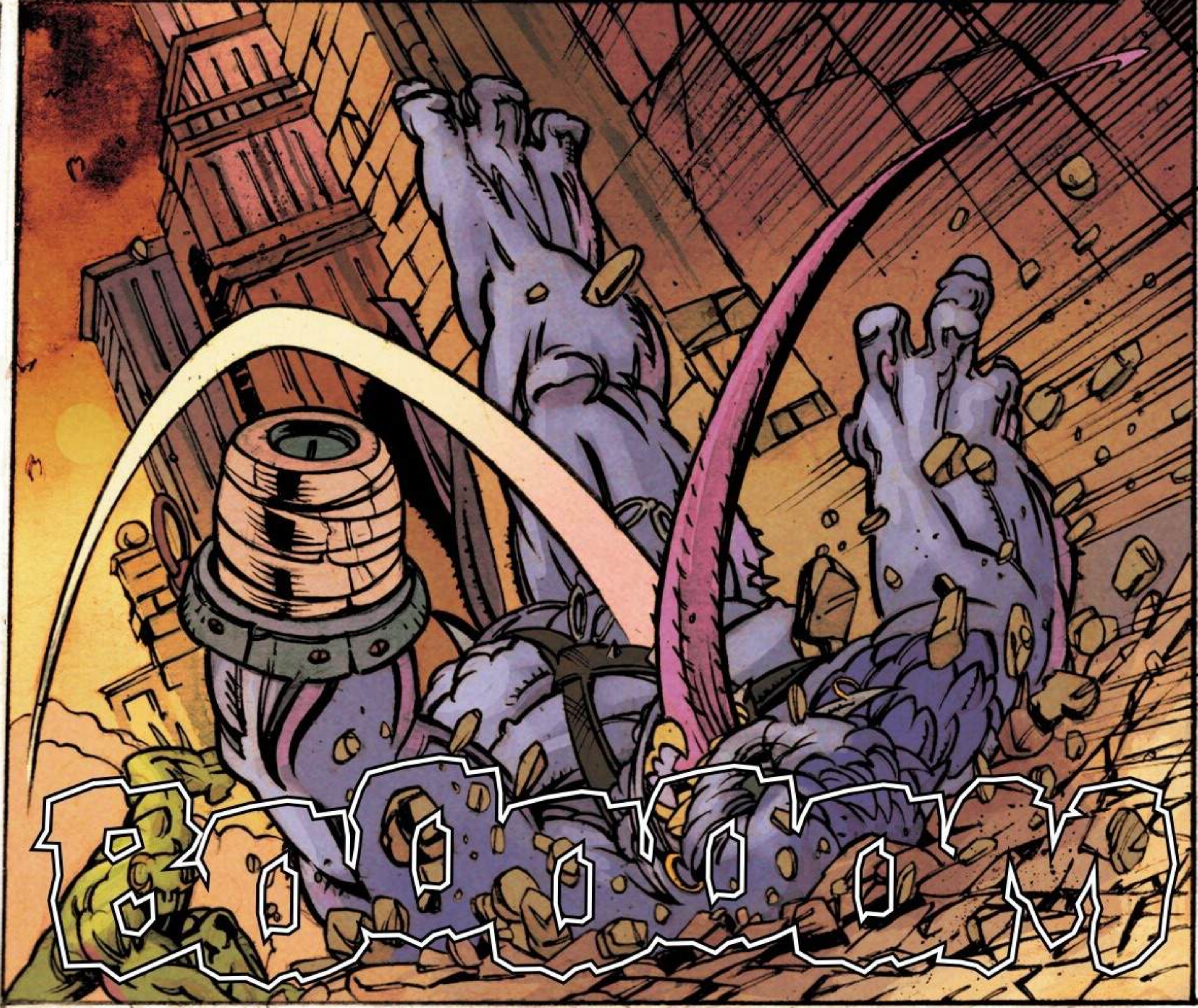
CHOMMP



GRUNNNNCH



SHK RAAAKK



BOOOOOOO



WHERE IS YOUR CHILD GOD?





I AM ELDEST.

FIRSTBORN OF THE MOTHER OF HORRORS, TO WHOM THIS WORLD BELONGED.



WHY HAVE YOU COME...



...AND HOW CAME YOU BY THE GREEN FIRE IN YOUR FLESH?



MY BODY WAS BURNED TO ASH BY A STONE FROM THE SKY. IT GAVE ME THIS ONE IN RETURN.*

AS FOR WHY I HAVE COME...



*AS SEEN IN IMMORTAL HULK: TIME OF MONSTERS!



...I WILL SHOW YOU.

SHNNK



NO. I WILL
TELL YOU WHY
YOU HAVE
COME.

YOU ARE
HERE BECAUSE
FATE BROUGHT
YOU TO ME.



ALL
LIVING FLESH
IS MY BIRTHRIGHT.
MANY BODIES HAVE
I WORN, AND MANY
WILL I YET WEAR,
FOR ALL BELONG
TO ME.

IN THIS
WAY AM I
DEATHLESS.
MY EXALTED
MOTHER'S
GIFT TO
ME.

BUT MY
MOTHER WAS
LOCKED DEEP IN THE
EARTH, WITH A SINGLE
GATE THAT NONE
CAN OPEN SAVE
HE WHO BUILT
IT.

I THOUGHT
HER SENTENCE
WOULD BE
ETERNAL.

BUT NOW
FATE HAS SENT
ME YOU, WHOSE
FLESH BURNS WITH
THE GREEN FLAME
OF MOTHER'S
ENEMY.

ALL
FLESH IS
MINE, BULL-
MAN OF
AKKADIA...





...BUT
YOURS MOST
OF ALL.



I
BELONG...



...TO NO
ONE.



YOU ARE
A RIDDLE
TO ME.



ALL
KNOW YOUR
NAME.

WARS
BEYOND
COUNTING
HAVE YOU
FOUGHT.

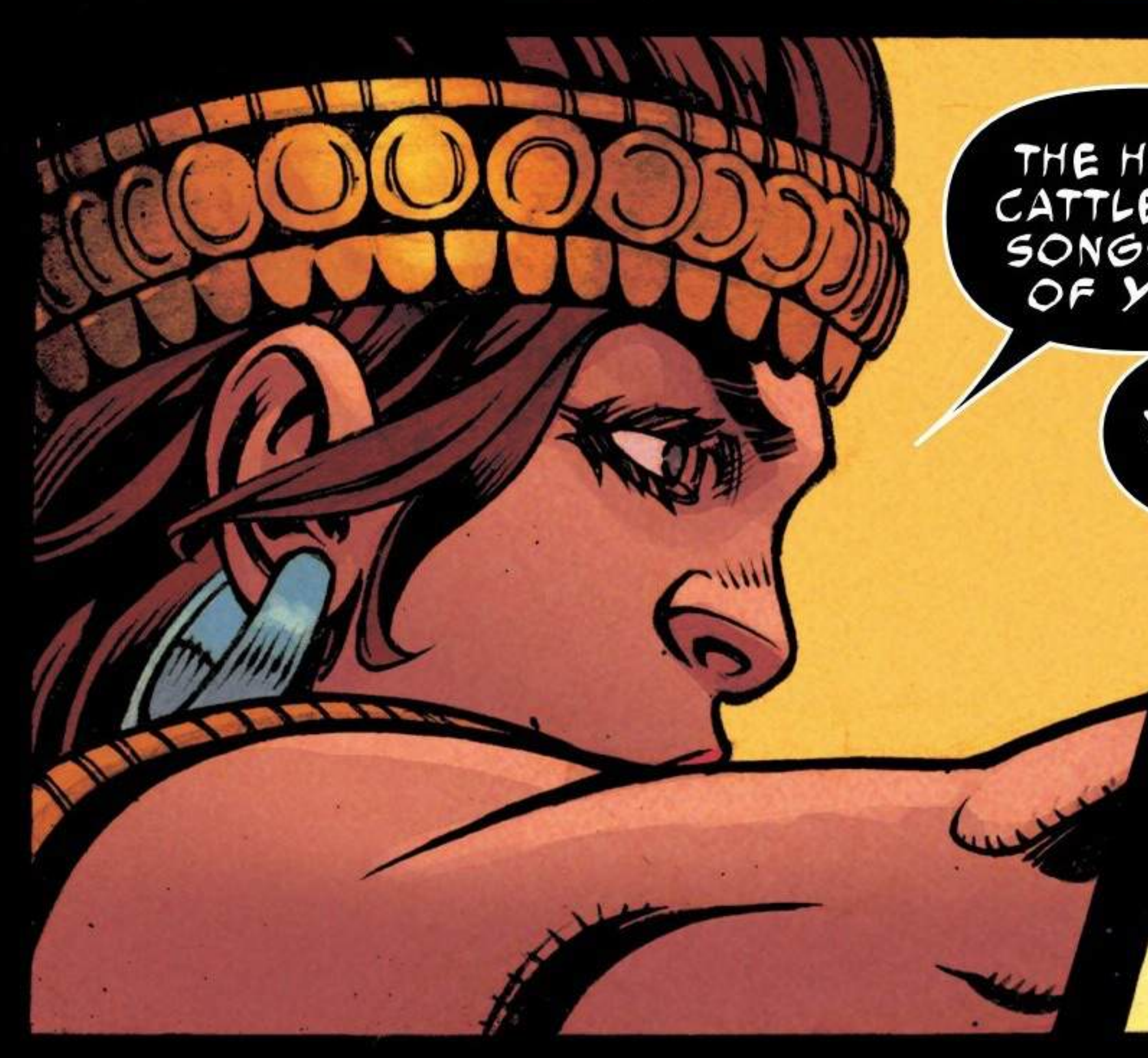


WHERE
THEN ARE YOUR
LANDS?

YOUR
SPOILS, YOUR
WIVES, YOUR
SONS?



THE HUMAN
CATTLE SING
SONGS NOT
OF YOU...



...BUT OF
YOUR LESSER
COMRADES.



YOU COME
TO ME WITH
SNIVELING CATTLE
AT YOUR
HEELS...



...THE
BLOOD OF
OUR BROTHERS
ON YOUR
HANDS.

THOOM



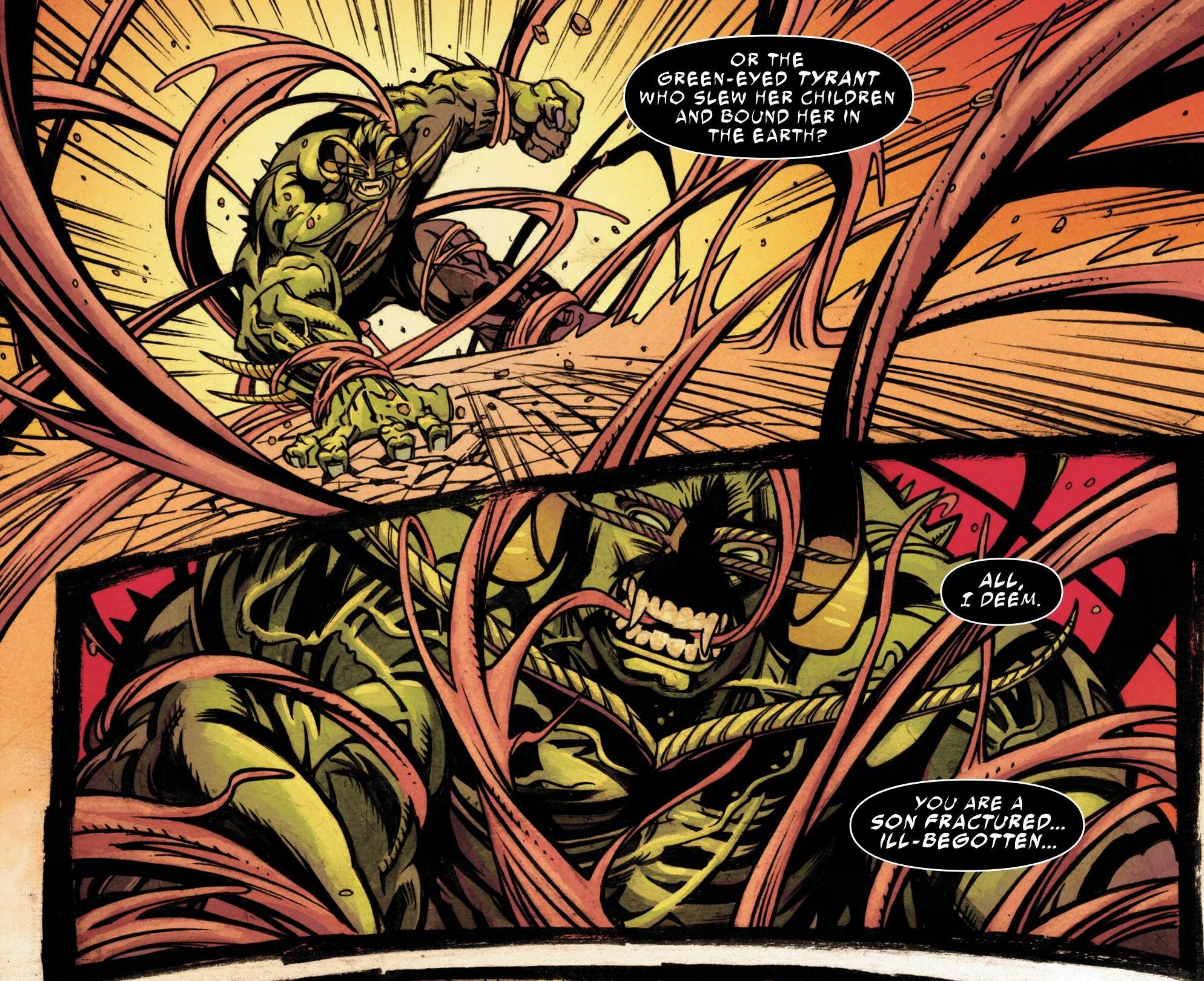
WHOSE
SON ARE YOU,
ENKIDU?



THESE
FERAL
MORTALS AT
THY BACK?



OUR
EXALTED
MOTHER OF
HORRORS?



OR THE
GREEN-EYED TYRANT
WHO SLEW HER CHILDREN
AND BOUND HER IN
THE EARTH?

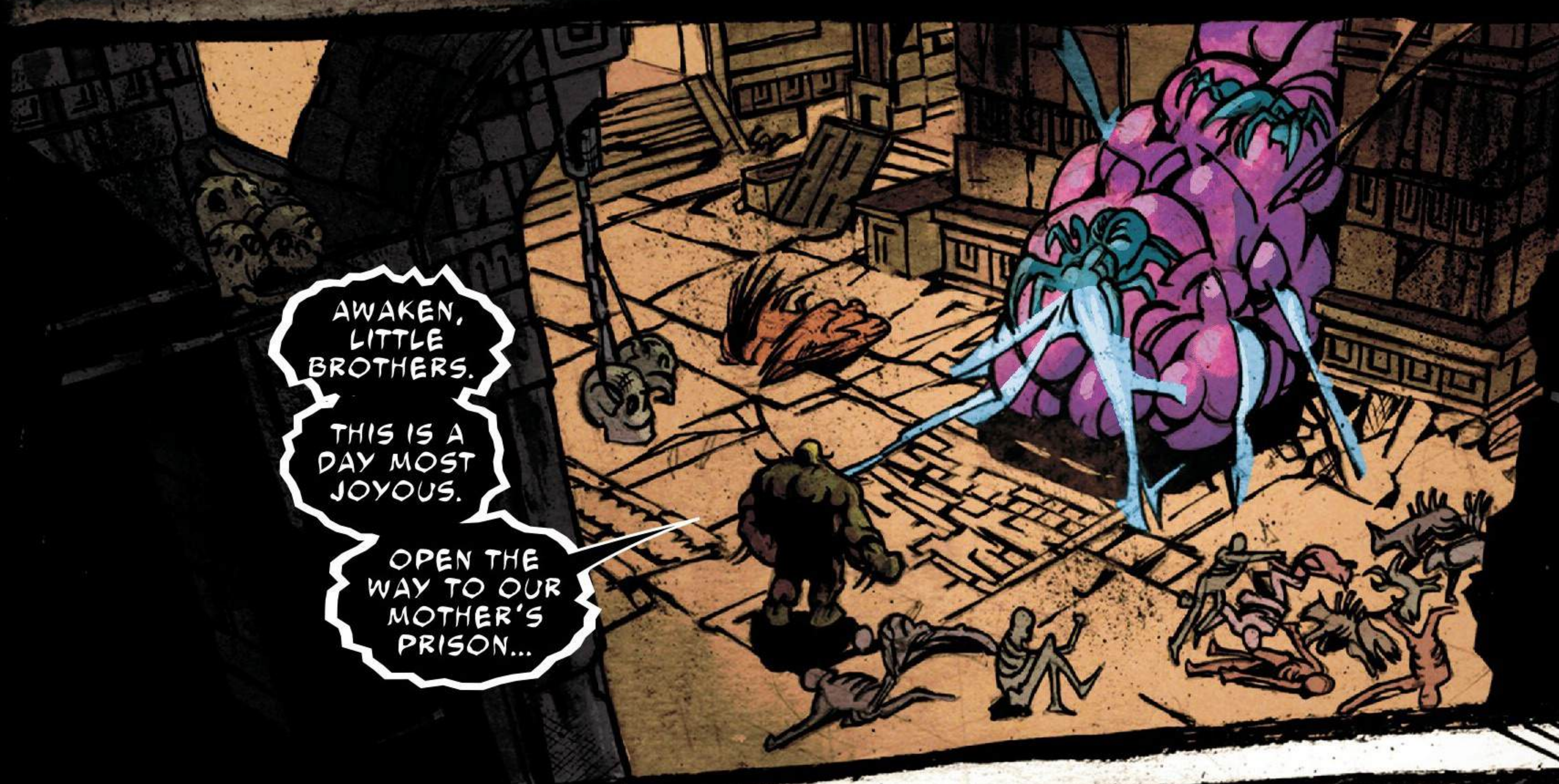
ALL,
I DEEM.

YOU ARE A
SON FRACTURED...
ILL-BEGOTTEN...



...FALSE.

AND NOW
YOUR STRENGTH
IS MINE.



AWAKEN,
LITTLE
BROTHERS.

THIS IS A
DAY MOST
JOYOUS.

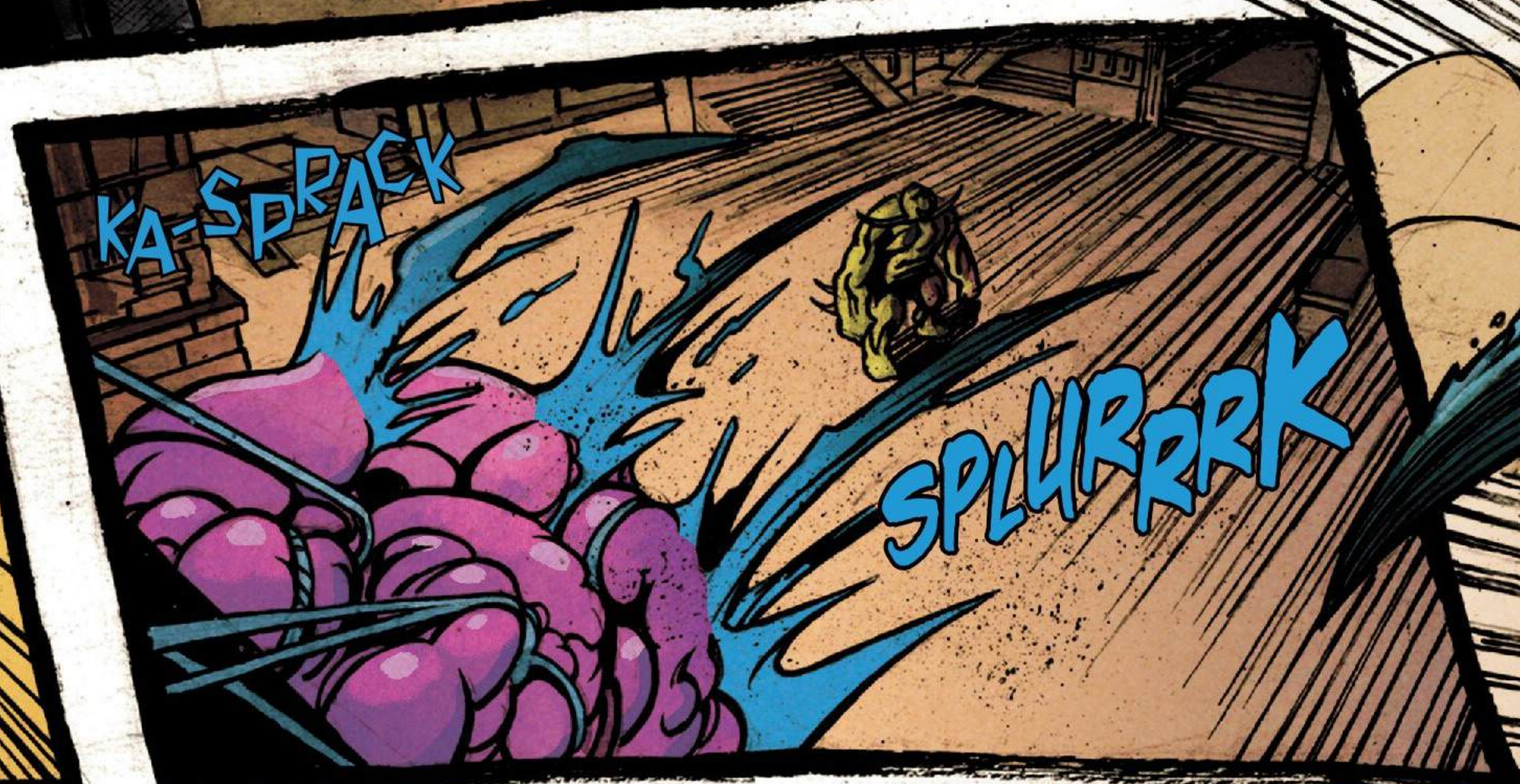
OPEN THE
WAY TO OUR
MOTHER'S
PRISON...



...FOR I
NOW HOLD
THE KEY.



KA-SPRACK



THY
SONGS OF
ANGUISH HURT
MY HEART.

I CANNOT
EASE THY
SUFFERING

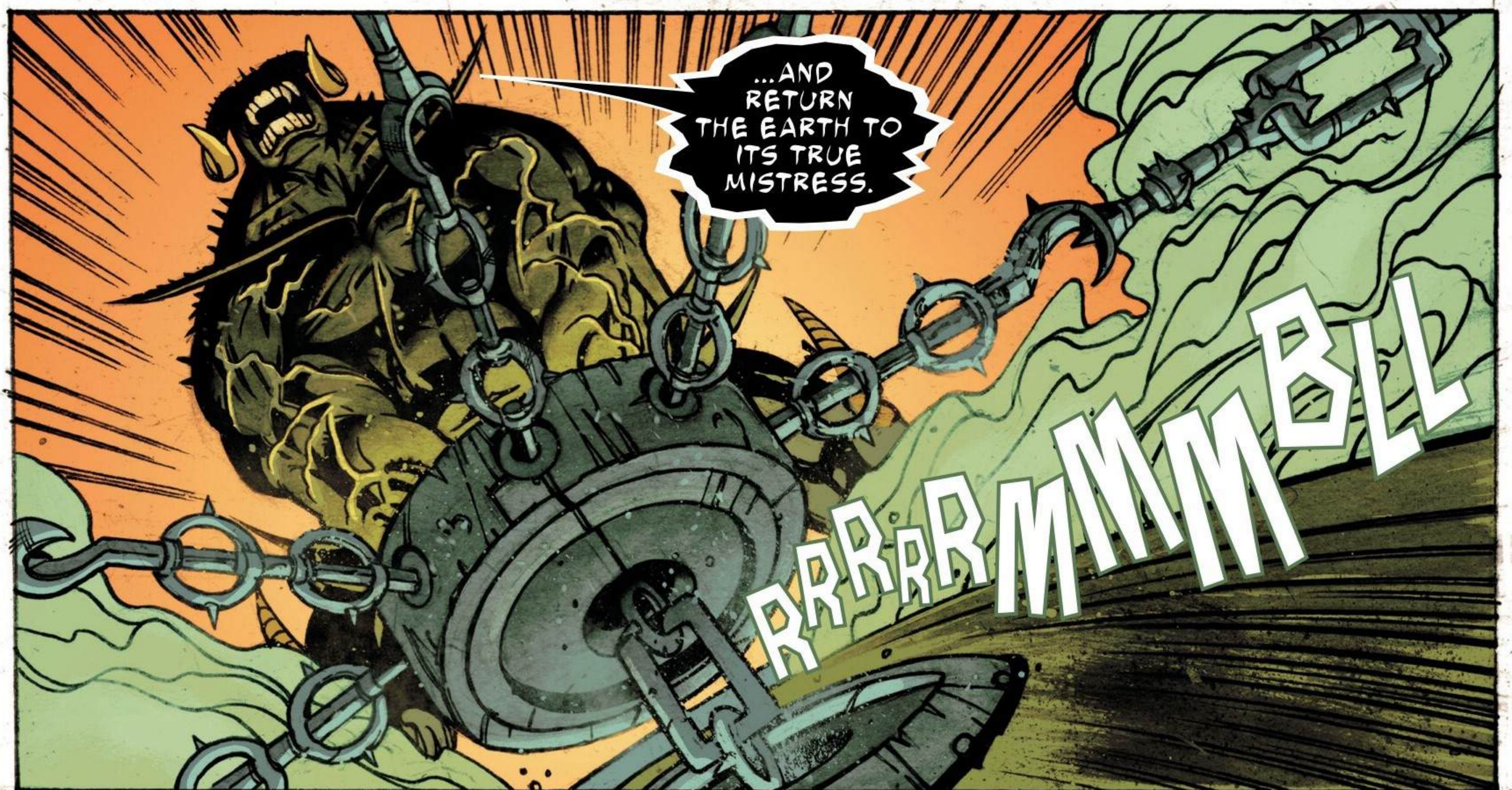


...BUT I'LL
SEE TO IT
YOU DO NOT
SUFFER
IDLY.



I FEEL
YOU WRIGGLING
WITHIN YOUR MIND,
FRACTURED
SON.

WATCH AS
I UNDO YOUR
BRUTE FATHER'S
WORK...



...AND
RETURN
THE EARTH TO
ITS TRUE
MISTRESS.

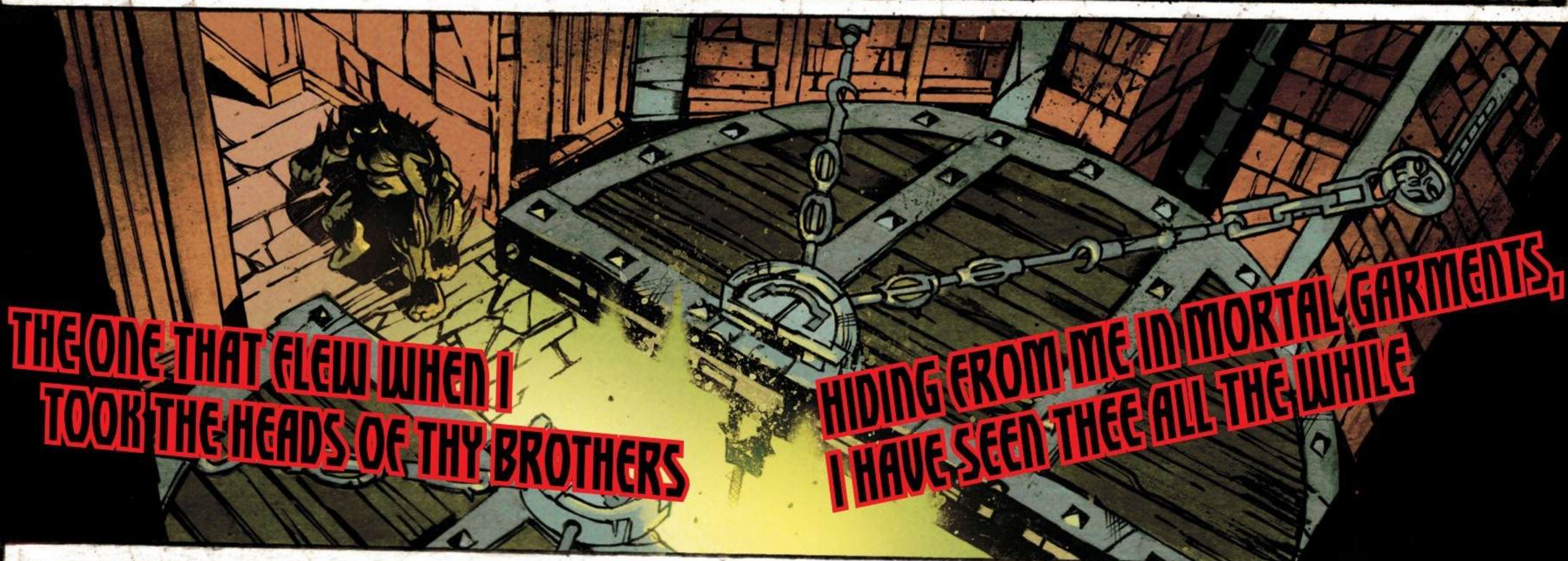
RRRRRRMMMM BELL



**"ELDEST" THOU
NAMEST THYSELF**



I REMEMBER THEE, LITTLE BEASTLING



**THE ONE THAT FLEW WHEN I
TOOK THE HEADS OF THY BROTHERS**

**HIDING FROM ME IN MORTAL GARMENTS,
I HAVE SEEN THEE ALL THE WHILE**



THY FOUL MOTHER'S SENTENCE IS NOT ENDED



GET THEE FROM MY SIGHT

FWHOOOON



LEST THY HEAD JOIN
THE HEADS OF THY KIN

GAAAAHHH!

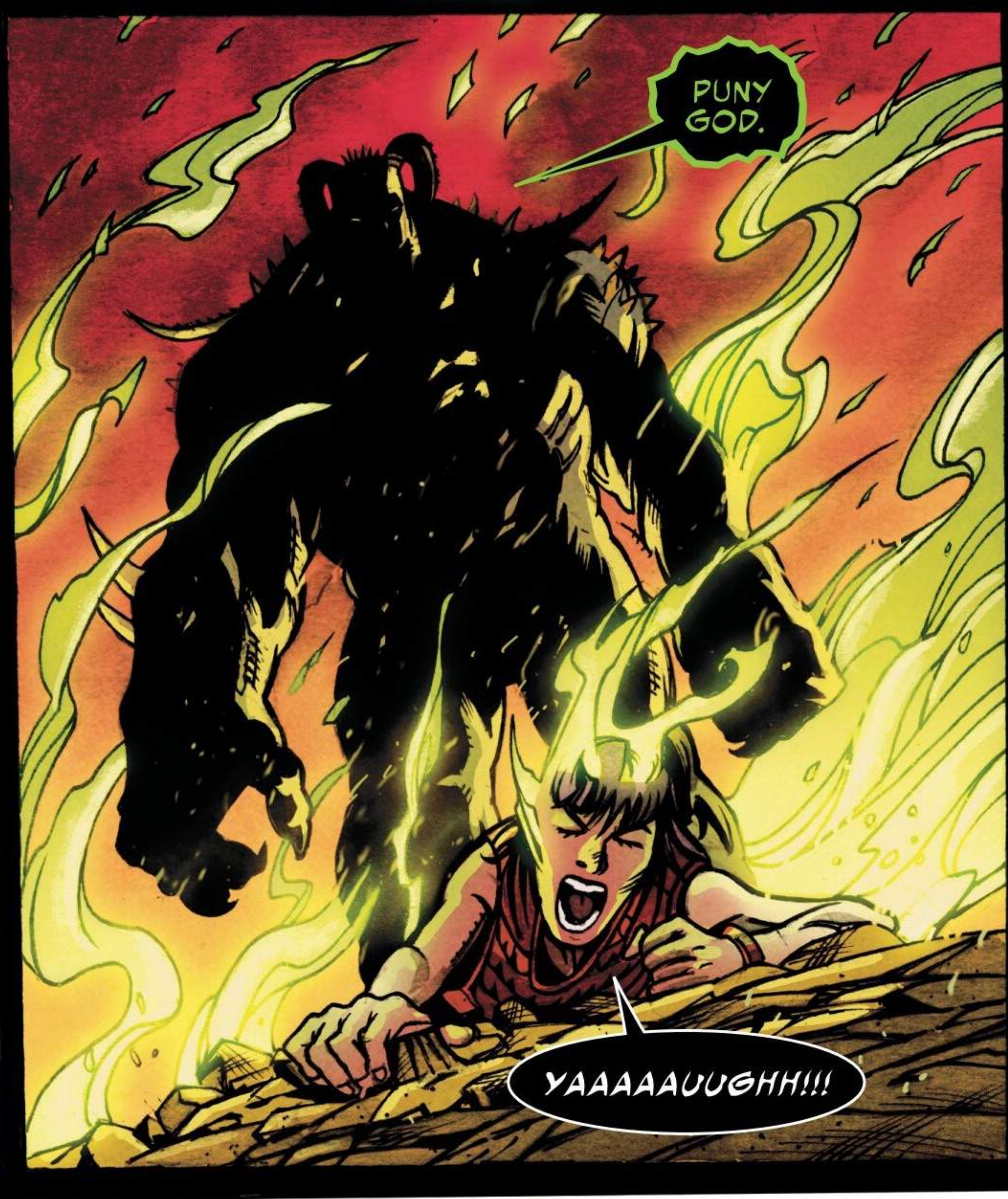
GET AWAY!



GET AWAY!



HRRNN.



PUNY GOD.

YAAAAAUGH!!!



GUNNCH

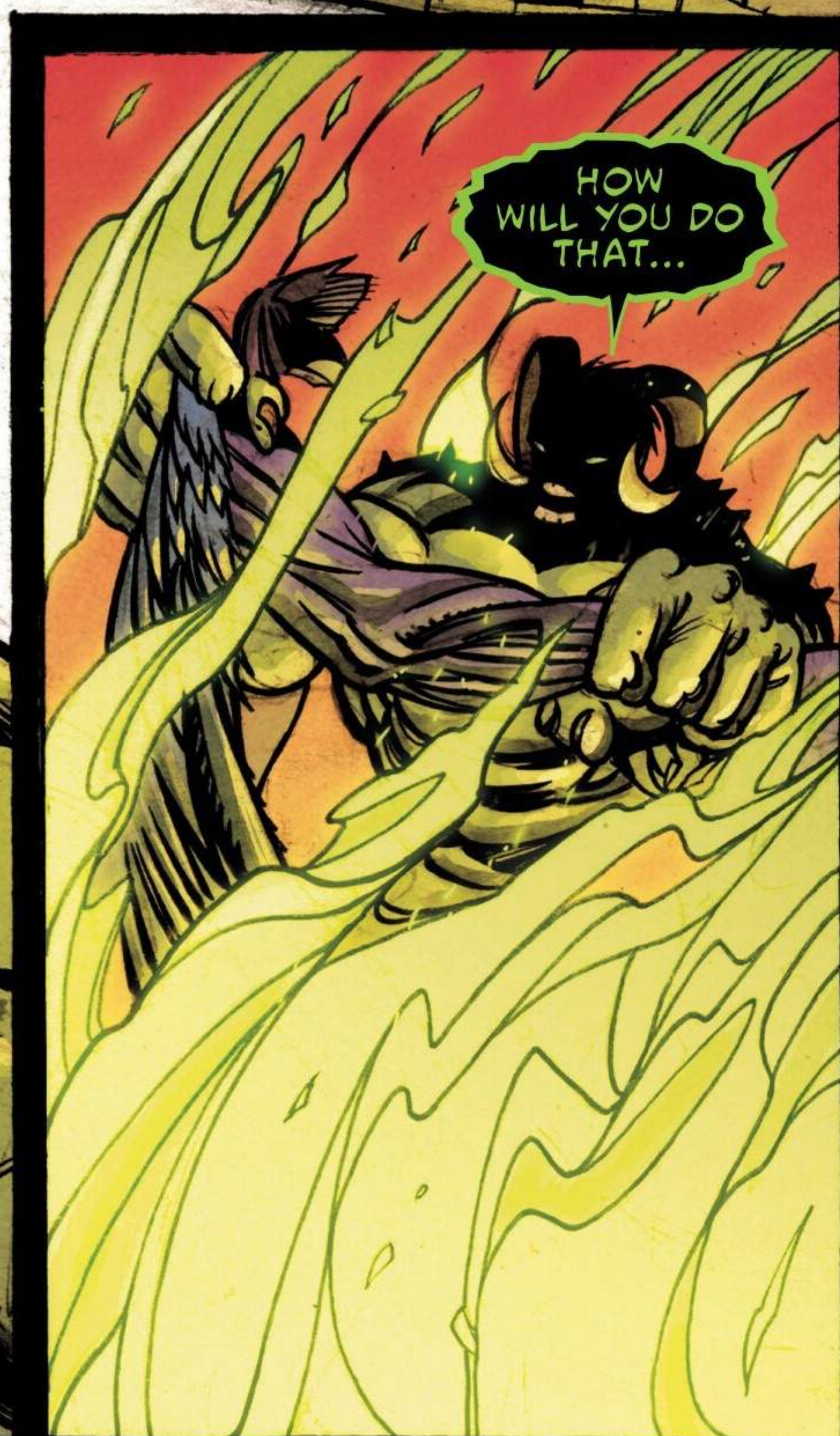
IT BURNS!

THE GREEN FLAME BUURRRRNNNS!!!



YOUR FLESH... IS MINE, FRACTURED SON!

ONE DAY I WILL CLAIM IT, FREE THE MOTHER OF HORRORS, AND SET THE WORLD TO RIGHTS!



HOW WILL YOU DO THAT...



SHRRRRRIIIIPPP

...FROM BENEATH THE GROUND?



YAAAUUGH!



HRRNNN.

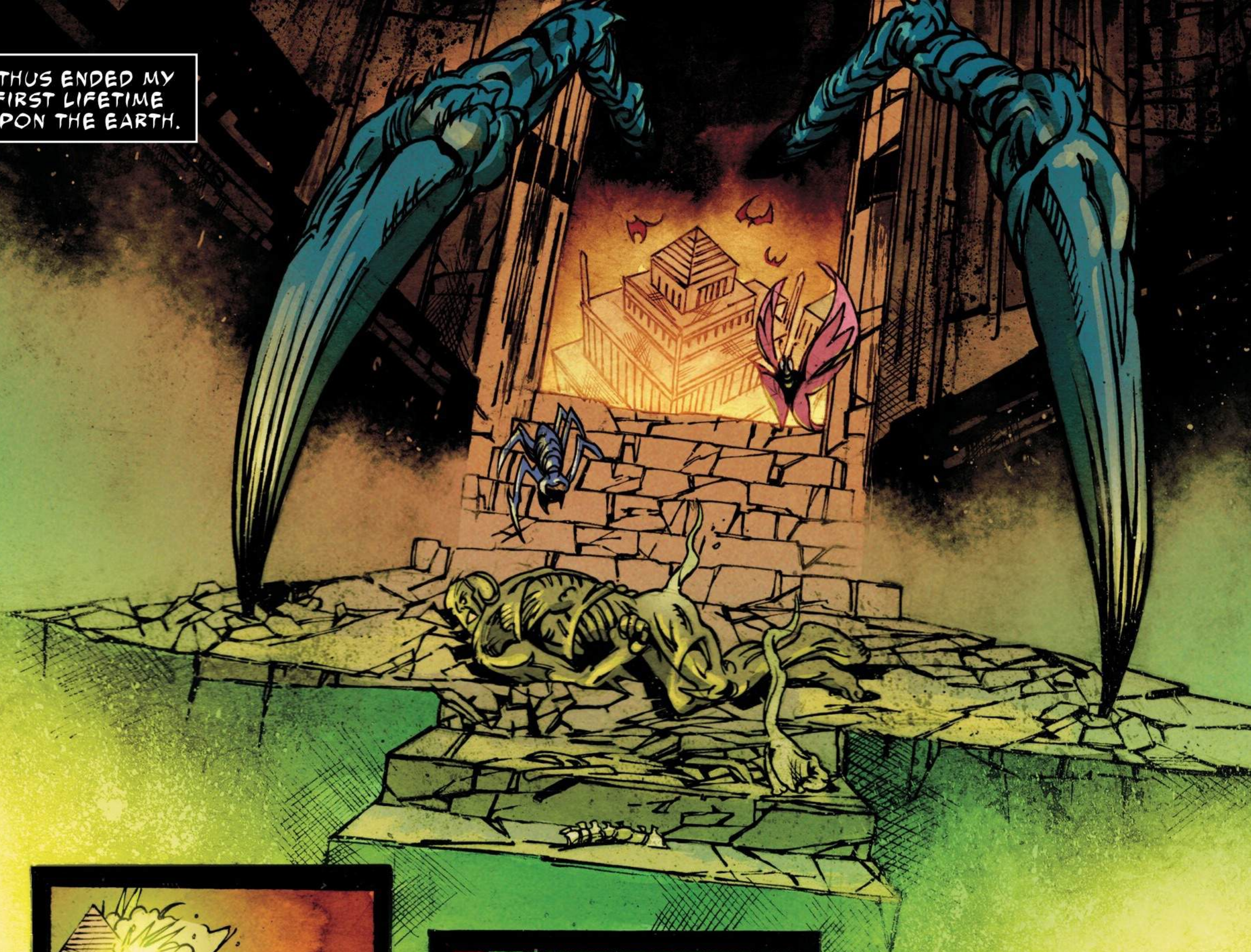
THE OLD...
WOMAN...



...SPOKE
TRUE, AFTER
ALL.



"THUS ENDED MY
FIRST LIFETIME
UPON THE EARTH.



"THE VENGEANCE
OF OUR MOTHER'S
ENEMY WAS SWIFT.



"OUR PEOPLE FLED
IN FEAR OF THE ONE
BELOW ALL, AND
THE CATTLE RETOOK
THEIR CITY.



"THEY BUILT A KING'S
TOMB FOR THE
FRACTURED SON, AND
SACRIFICED MANY
SLAVES TO SERVE HIM
IN THE AFTERLIFE.

"THE TOMB THEY
ADORNED WITH
OUR BONES..."



...INCLUDING
THE "CHILD
GOD" THAT HAD
CONQUERED
THEM.

THE GREEN
DOOR...IT REALLY
IS SHUT.

ISN'T IT,
ELDEST?

YES,
POPPET.

AS LONG
AS IT WAS OPEN,
I FELT THE BRUTE'S
GREAT GREEN EYE
UPON ME, BODILESS
THOUGH I WAS.
FOR THOUSANDS
OF YEARS, I
FELT IT.

BUT NOW
AT LAST, THE
GREEN DOOR
IS SHUT...

"...AND THE
FLESH OF THE
FRACTURED SON
WILL SOON BE
MINE FOREVER."



INCREDIBLE HULK #15 DISCO DAZZLER VARIANT BY TODD NAUCK & RACHELLE ROSENBERG



LAS VEGAS.

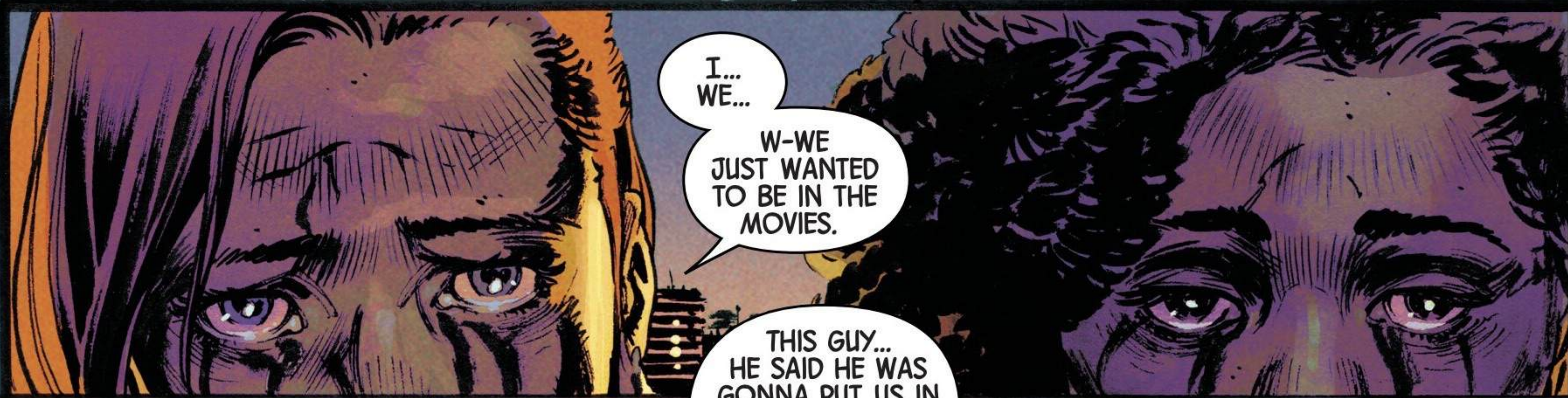




S-STAY
BACK! LEAVE US
ALONE!

INTERESTING
ACCENT, TOO. UPPER
NORTHWEST?

WHAT
BROUGHT
YOU TWO INTO THE
DESERT, SO FAR
FROM HOME?



I...
WE...

W-WE
JUST WANTED
TO BE IN THE
MOVIES.

THIS GUY...
HE SAID HE WAS
GONNA PUT US IN
A MOVIE. THAT'S
ALL WE WANTED.
→SNIFF← BUT
HE...

WE JUST
WANTED THE
WHOLE WORLD
TO SEE US.

TO
LOVE
US.



THERE'S
THE TRUTH.



THERE ARE
OTHERS LIKE YOU
HERE. PEOPLE WHO
PURSUED GREATNESS,
ONLY TO BE ABUSED
OR CAST ASIDE.

IF YOU
CAN TRUST A
STRANGER JUST
ONE MORE
TIME...

"...I'LL GIVE
YOU WHAT YOU
CAME FOR."

THERE
ARE **CAVES**
DOWN HERE?
IN **VEGAS**?

THESE CAVES
GO ON FOR **MILES**.
NOT ALL OF THEM HAVE
EVEN BEEN EXPLORED,
EXCEPT BY US.

THE
NATIVES WHO
LIVED HERE BEFORE
US KEPT THEM
SACRED...

...AND FILLED
THEM WITH THEIR
TREASURES.



30 DAYS LATER.

POOM

POOM

POOM

POOM

POOM

POOM

HEY,
UH...YOU'RE
**THE INCREDIBLE
HULK. FROM THE
AVENGERS,**
RIGHT?

W-WE CAN'T
LET YOU TEAR UP
THE STREET LIKE THIS.
CAN WE GET YOU
A **TRUCK** OR
SOME--

HEY.
LOOK.

LOOKS LIKE
SOMEBODY'S
EXPECTING
HIM.

30 DAYS LATER.

PLOOM PLOOM

PLOOM PLOOM PLOOM

HEY,
UH...YOU'RE
THE INCREDIBLE HULK. FROM THE
AVENGERS,
RIGHT?

W-WE CAN'T
LET YOU TEAR UP
THE STREET LIKE THIS.
CAN WE GET YOU
A **TRUCK** OR
SOME--

HEY.
LOOK.

LOOKS LIKE
SOMEBODY'S
EXPECTING HIM.

30 DAYS LATER.

PLOOM PLOOM PLOOM

HEY, UH...YOU'RE THE **INCREDIBLE HULK**. FROM THE **AVENGERS**, RIGHT?

W-WE CAN'T LET YOU TEAR UP THE STREET LIKE THIS. CAN WE GET YOU A **TRUCK** OR SOME--

HEY. LOOK.

LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY'S EXPECTING HIM.

30 DAYS LATER.

PLOOM

PLOOM

PLOOM

PLOOM

PLOOM

HEY,
UH...YOU'RE
THE INCREDIBLE HULK. FROM THE
AVENGERS,
RIGHT?

W-WE CAN'T
LET YOU TEAR UP
THE STREET LIKE THIS.
CAN WE GET YOU
A **TRUCK** OR
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HEY.
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LOOKS LIKE
SOMEBODY'S
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30 DAYS LATER.

PLOOM PLOOM

PLOOM PLOOM PLOOM

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UH...YOU'RE
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RIGHT?

W-WE CAN'T
LET YOU TEAR UP
THE STREET LIKE THIS.
CAN WE GET YOU
A **TRUCK** OR
SOME--

HEY.
LOOK.

LOOKS LIKE
SOMEBODY'S
EXPECTING HIM.

30 DAYS LATER.

POOM

POOM

POOM

POOM

POOM

POOM

HEY,
UH...YOU'RE
**THE INCREDIBLE
HULK. FROM THE
AVENGERS,**
RIGHT?

W-WE CAN'T
LET YOU TEAR UP
THE STREET LIKE THIS.
CAN WE GET YOU
A **TRUCK** OR
SOME--

HEY.
LOOK.

LOOKS LIKE
SOMEBODY'S
EXPECTING
HIM.

30 DAYS LATER.

PLOOM PLOOM

PLOOM PLOOM PLOOM

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30 DAYS LATER.

PLOOM

PLOOM

PLOOM

PLOOM

PLOOM

PLOOM

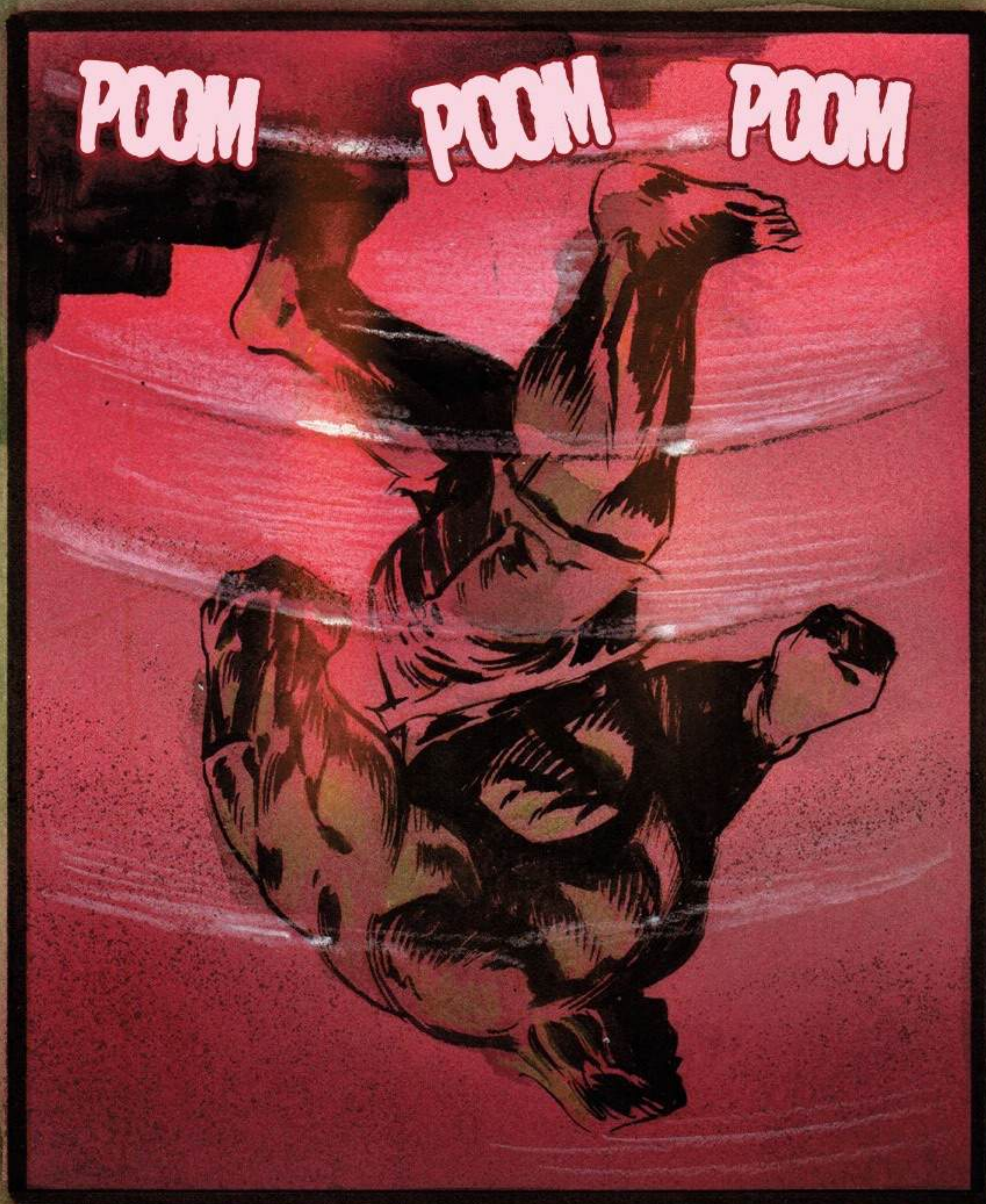
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UH...YOU'RE
THE INCREDIBLE HULK. FROM THE
AVENGERS,
RIGHT?

W-WE CAN'T
LET YOU TEAR UP
THE STREET LIKE THIS.
CAN WE GET YOU
A **TRUCK** OR
SOME--

HEY.
LOOK.

LOOKS LIKE
SOMEBODY'S
EXPECTING HIM.





IT'S
ALMOST TIME,
BRUCE.

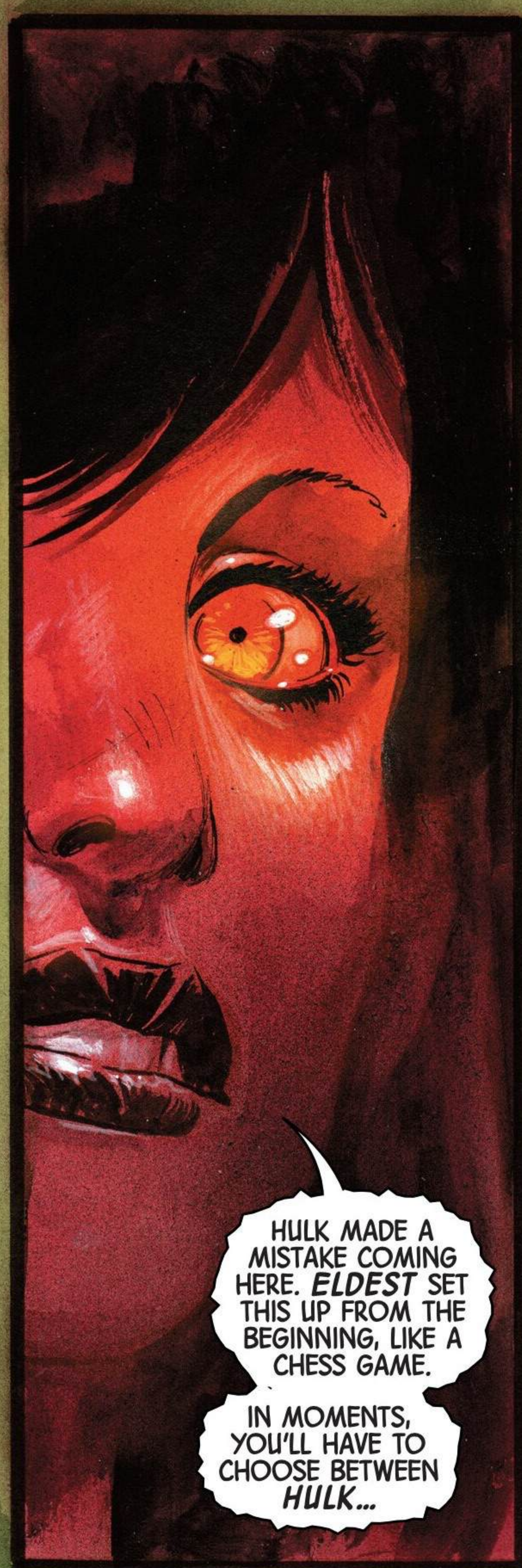


YOU'RE
NOT REAL,
BETTY.

AND I'M
NOT TRUSTING
ANYONE WITH
SOMETHING AS
DANGEROUS
AS **HULK.**

IF YOU
DON'T, IT'LL BE
CHARLIE WHO
PAYS THE
PRICE.

...WHAT?



HULK MADE A
MISTAKE COMING
HERE. **ELDEST** SET
THIS UP FROM THE
BEGINNING, LIKE A
CHESS GAME.

IN MOMENTS,
YOU'LL HAVE TO
CHOOSE BETWEEN
HULK...



"...AND THE KID
YOU CAME HERE
TO SAVE."



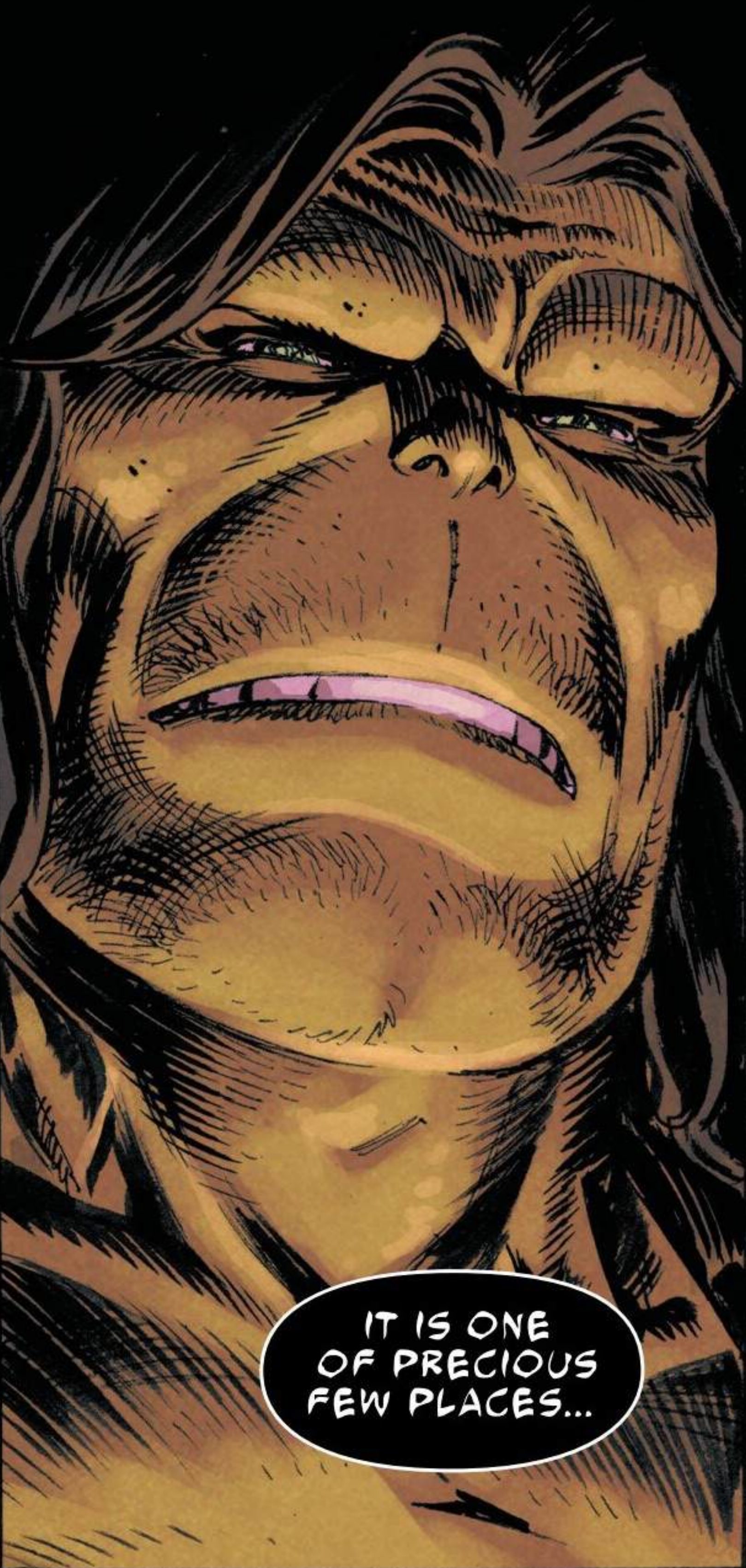
I KNEW
YOU WOULD
COME.

?



KNOW
YOU WHERE
YOU ARE?

THIS
CAVERN WAS
ONCE A TEMPLE OF
LYCANA, DAUGHTER OF
MY OWN FLESH, MOTHER
TO SKINWALKERS
IN ALL THEIR
FORMS.



IT IS ONE
OF PRECIOUS
FEW PLACES...



YOU'RE ELDEST.

JUST SO YOU REMEMBER ME?

NEVER SAW YOU BEFORE.

I KNEW YOU NEARLY FOUR THOUSAND YEARS AGO.

WE DIED TOGETHER. OUR BONES WERE ENTOMBED TOGETHER.

THERE ARE NONE LIVING OR DEAD WHO KNOW YOU BETTER THAN I, FRACTURED SON.

...WHERE YOU MIGHT GIVE YOUR LITTLE COMPANION NEW LIFE.

ALL I KNOW ABOUT YOU...

...IS THAT THIS IS YOUR FAULT.

THE BARE SPOT IN THE ARMOR IS WHERE THE BLADE MUST GO. YOU WOULD BLAME ME FOR THIS?

YEAH.



SO LIKE YOUR
PREDECESSOR.



I AM THE
FIRST AND STRONGEST
OF OUR KIND. YOU LACK
THE STRENGTH TO
HARM ME.



JUST
MEANS...



...I DON'T
HAVE TO
STOP.



GRAAH



YOU THINK
THIS STRIPPLING
MORTAL FORM
IS ALL I AM?

THIS FLESH
IS BUT A
GARMENT.



SEE MY
TRUE FORM,
LITTLE
THING.



THERE BE
STRONGER
THINGS IN THE
DARK THAN
THEE.



"DON'T LET THEM MAKE HER A MONSTER!!!"

I HEAR THE VOICE OF YOUR MORTAL VESSEL.

"BANNER," IS IT? HOW HE FEARS US, AND YOU MOST OF ALL.

"MONSTER" IS THE WORD OF MORTALS AND WEAKLINGS. THERE IS NO SIN IN STRENGTH.

BUT THE CHOICE IS YOURS.

GIVE THE GIRL TO THE SKINWALKERS...

...OR SURRENDER YOUR FLESH TO ME.

KRR

NO.



HULK *CAN'T*
WIN, BRUCE. ELDEST
IS TOO STRONG.

THE ONLY WAY
TO RESTORE CHARLIE
AS *SHE WAS--MORTAL,*
AND *UNSPOILED--*
IS TO SURRENDER.

THIS
IS A *PACTUM*
AETERNUS. AN ANCIENT,
UNBREAKABLE
CONTRACT.

ONCE SPOKEN,
THE WORDS BECOME
PROPHECY. A LAW
OF THE NATURAL
WORLD.

SAY THE
WORDS, BRUCE,
AND *SIGN*.

BETRAY
HULK...



"...AND CHARLIE
TIDWELL IS SAVED."



"...I'M SORRY."



IN EXCHANGE
FOR THE RESTORED
BODY AND SOUL OF
CHARLENE
TIDWELL...



"...I FOREVER
SURRENDER
MY FLESH..."



HULK...



"...TO ELDEST."



I
HAVE HIM,
MOTHER.





SOON
YOU'LL BE
FREE...

...AND THIS
WORLD SET
TO RIGHTS.



INCREDIBLE HULK #16 VARIANT BY PAULO SIQUEIRA & RACHELLE ROSENBERG





→HUFF←

→HUFF←

→HUFF←



→HUFF←

→HUFF←

CHFF
CHFF



→HUFF←

RRRRLLL

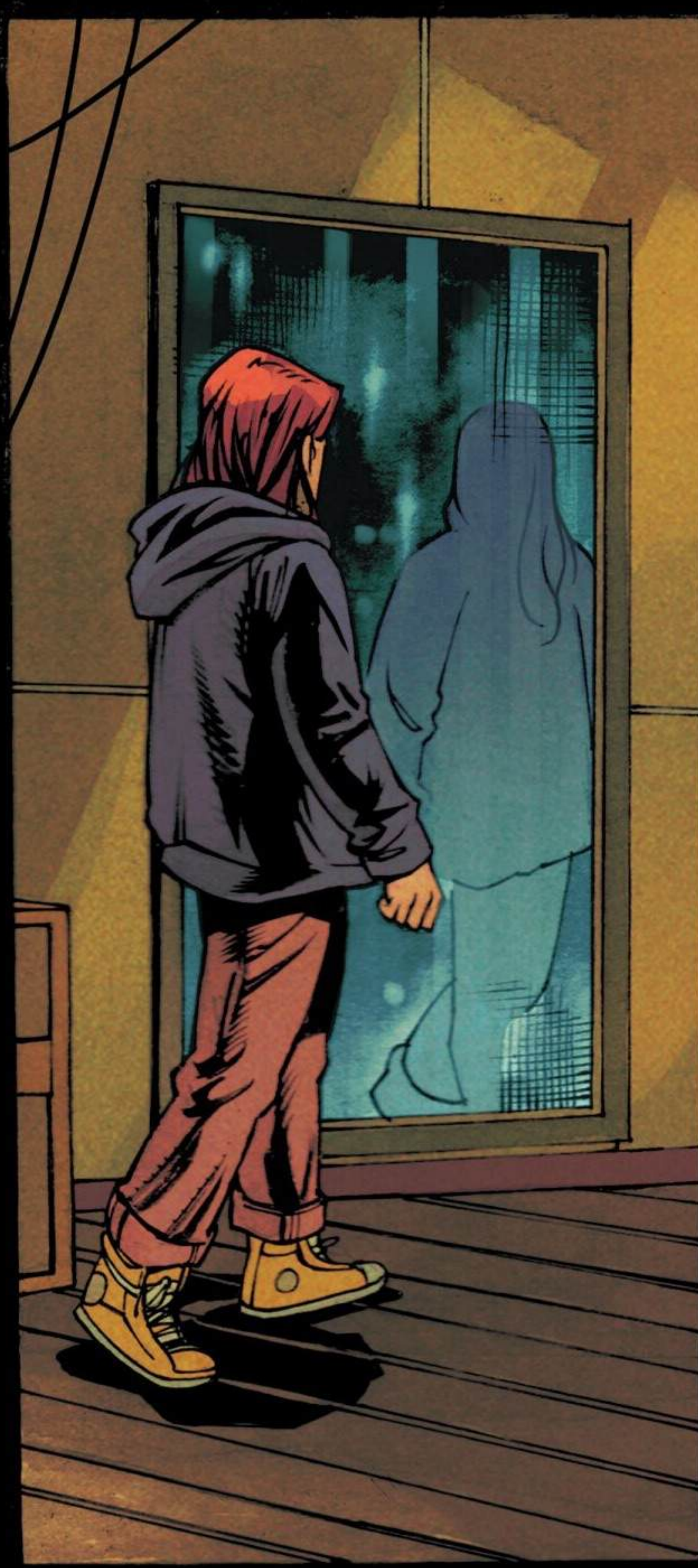
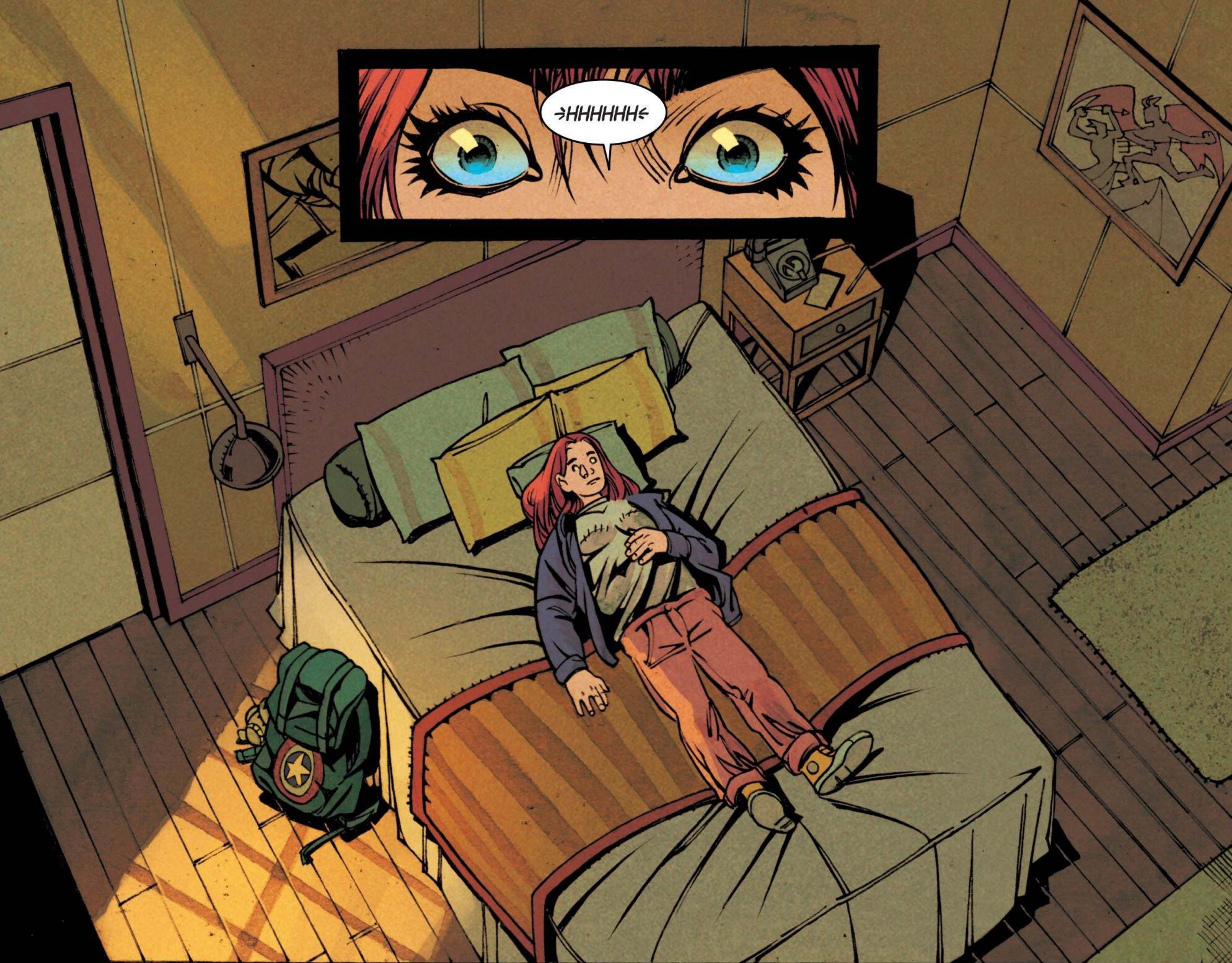


THE
PACTUM
AETERNUS IS
SEALED.



BRING
HER BACK,
DEAREST.

IT'S
DONE.





WELCOME
BACK, CHARLIE
TIDWELL.



WH-WHAT
HAPPENED TO
MY FACE?

I USED TO
HAVE...A BURN
ON MY FACE.



WHERE
AM I?

I WAS IN
NEW ORLEANS...
THERE WAS THIS
OLD LADY, AND
SH-SHE--

YOU WERE
DEAD. NOW
YOU'RE NOT.

YOU'RE IN
LAS VEGAS
NOW.



DEAD?

WH-WHERE'S
HULK? I NEED
TO FIND--

UNTIL ELDEST
HAS WHAT SHE
WANTS, *THIS* IS
WHERE YOU'LL
BE.

IT'S NICE
AND SAFE
BETWEEN THESE
FOUR WALLS.

BUT IF YOU TRY
TO SET FOOT
OUTSIDE THAT
DOOR...



"...WE'LL HAVETA BRING
YOU BACK FROM THE DEAD
ALL OVER AGAIN."

**LAS VEGAS.
BELOW.**



THE
PACTUM
AETERNUS
HAS BEEN
HONORED.

CHARLENE
TIDWELL IS
MADE ANEW,
WITHOUT EVEN
THE SCARS
SHE BORE.*



*TO SEE WHAT HAPPENED TO CHARLIE,
READ INCREDIBLE HULK #9-11! --JDW

AND NOW,
A MOMENT I'VE
DREAMT OF FOR
AN AGE AND
AN AGE.

THE
FRACTURED
SON IN
CHAINS...

...MY
EXALTED
MOTHER ON
THE CUSP OF
VICTORY.



RROOARR

YOUR RAGE
SERVES YOU ILL.
LIKE THE PACTUM
AETERNUS, THE CHAINS
OF UTHL ARE
UNBREAKABLE.



THE ONE YOU
CALL "BANNER" GAVE
ME YOU IN EXCHANGE
FOR THE WHELP'S
LIFE...

...AND NOW
YOUR FLESH
IS MI--





WHAT
TREACHERY
IS THIS?!

THE PACTUM
AETERNUS IS
UNBREAKABLE.
WHOSE POWER
PROTECTS
YOU?



HEH.
PUNY.



THIS
CHANGES
NOTHING,
CREATURE.

THE GREEN
FIRE IN YOUR
FLESH IS A
KEY...

"...ONE I WILL POSSESS AT ANY COST."

LEMME OUT, YOU %#\$&S!!!

CAN'T KEEP ME IN HERE, YOU CREEPY SCHMUCKS!!!

WHAT THE HELL...?!



LEMME OUT!!!

HULK AND ME'RE GONNA MAKE YOU SORRY!

"WE'RE THE
STRONGEST
ONES THERE
ARE!!!"

RRNNGGGG

KTUNN NNG

ELDEST
CLAIMS THEY
WERE FORGED
FROM THE FIRST
FIRMAMENT
ITSELF.

YOUR TURN
IN THE TORTURE
CHAMBER, EH?

THERE'S
NO BREAKING
THOSE CHAINS.

SHUT UP,
BANNER.

HERE
BECAUSE
OF YOU.

LIKE
ALWAYS.

BOOM

BOOM

WHO'RE YOU TALKING TO?

GO AWAY.

IS THAT GIRL CHARLIE YOUR... **SIDEKICK**, OR SOMETHING?

SHE SURE GETS **MAD** LIKE YOU.

KID'S HERE?

DID THEY...FIX HER?

SHE'S ALIVE. THEY'RE HOLDING HER UNTIL YOU GIVE ELDEST WHAT SHE WANTS.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT ELDEST... LIKE...**IS**?

SHE JUST SHOWED UP A FEW WEEKS AGO. AND THE WAY SHE **TALKS**...IT'S LIKE SHE KNOWS EVERYTHING THAT'S EVER HAPPENED, IN THE **WHOLE WORLD**.

LEAVE ME ALONE.

LISTEN... I KNOW YOU USED TO BE AN **AVENGER** OR SOMETHING, AND I...**→SNIFF←**

I--I THINK I NEED YOUR HELP.

CAN YOU HELP ME?

THE PEOPLE
HERE...THEY'RE
MONSTERS.

SPLAT

REAL
ONES.

THEY KILLED
MY BEST
FRIEND...TURNED
HER INTO A...

RIP

THEY MADE
ME DO THINGS,
AND I--I DID
THEM...

...AND
NOW I'M
A MONSTER,
TOO.

IT'S MY
TURN NEXT IN
THE GODSKIN. AND
AT THE END OF THE
CYCLE, I'LL BE...

I-I-I
CAN'T DO
IT.

IF I RUN
AWAY, THEY'LL
JUST FIND ME
AGAIN.

PLEASE...
IF I HELP
YOU BREAK OUT
SOMEHOW...

...WILL YOU
KILL THEM ALL
FOR ME?



→SNIFF
SNIFF←

THEY'RE
COMING. I'M
SORRY.

I
SHOULDN'T
HAVE COME.

FRACTURED
SON. ARE YOU
READY TO GIVE
WHAT WAS
PROMISED?



WHERE'S
THE KID?

CHARLENE
TIDWELL? MY
DARLING TEELGET
HAS BEEN WATCHING
OVER HER, HAVEN'T
YOU, DEAREST?



YES, ELDEST.
SHE SMELLS MOST
PLEASANT.

THOUGH I
DO RATHER MISS
THE PRETTY BURN
ON HER FACE.



TEELGET!
DO YOU FANCY
THE LITTLE
BRUTE?

WELL, I
SUPPOSE THERE'S
NO HARM IN IT. I'LL
LET YOU HAVE YOUR
PLAYTHING, AND EVEN
GIVE HER BACK THE
BURN YOU LIKE...



...ONCE
WE HAVE
WHAT WE
CAME
FOR.

I WISH TO
SPEAK TO YOUR
LESSER HALF, BRUTE.
THE MORTAL WHO
BETRAYED
YOU.

THE
ONE CALLED
BANNER.

WHOSE
HAND
PROTECTS
YOU?

GRRRRNN

SMASH
YOU,
BANNER.

YOU ARE
IN NO POSITION
TO BARGAIN.
TELL ME, OR
I--

...AND
I'LL TELL
YOU.

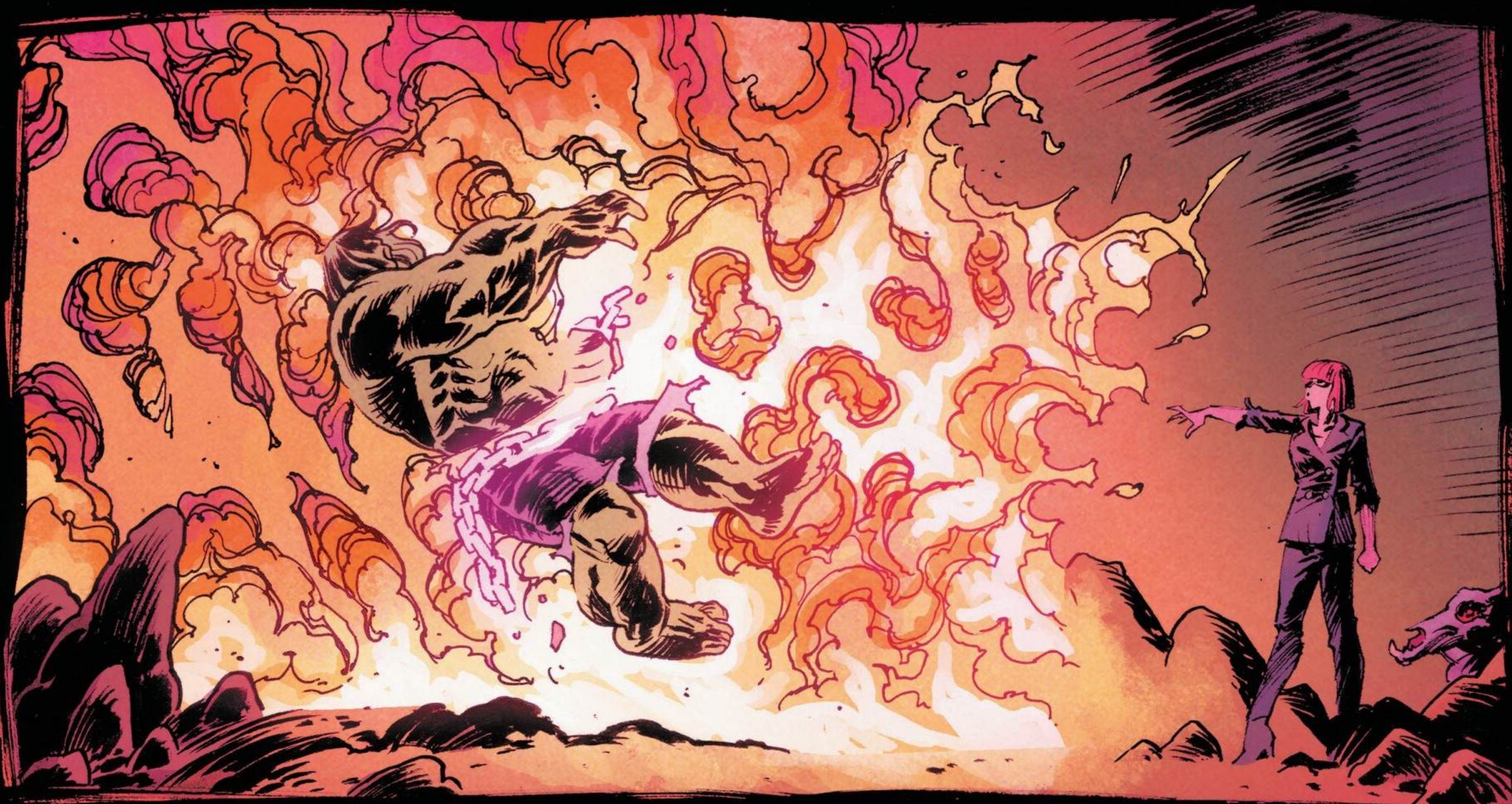
LET...
LET...

LET...
CHARLIE
GO...

SMASH
YOU BOTH.

SMASH!!!

YOU!!!



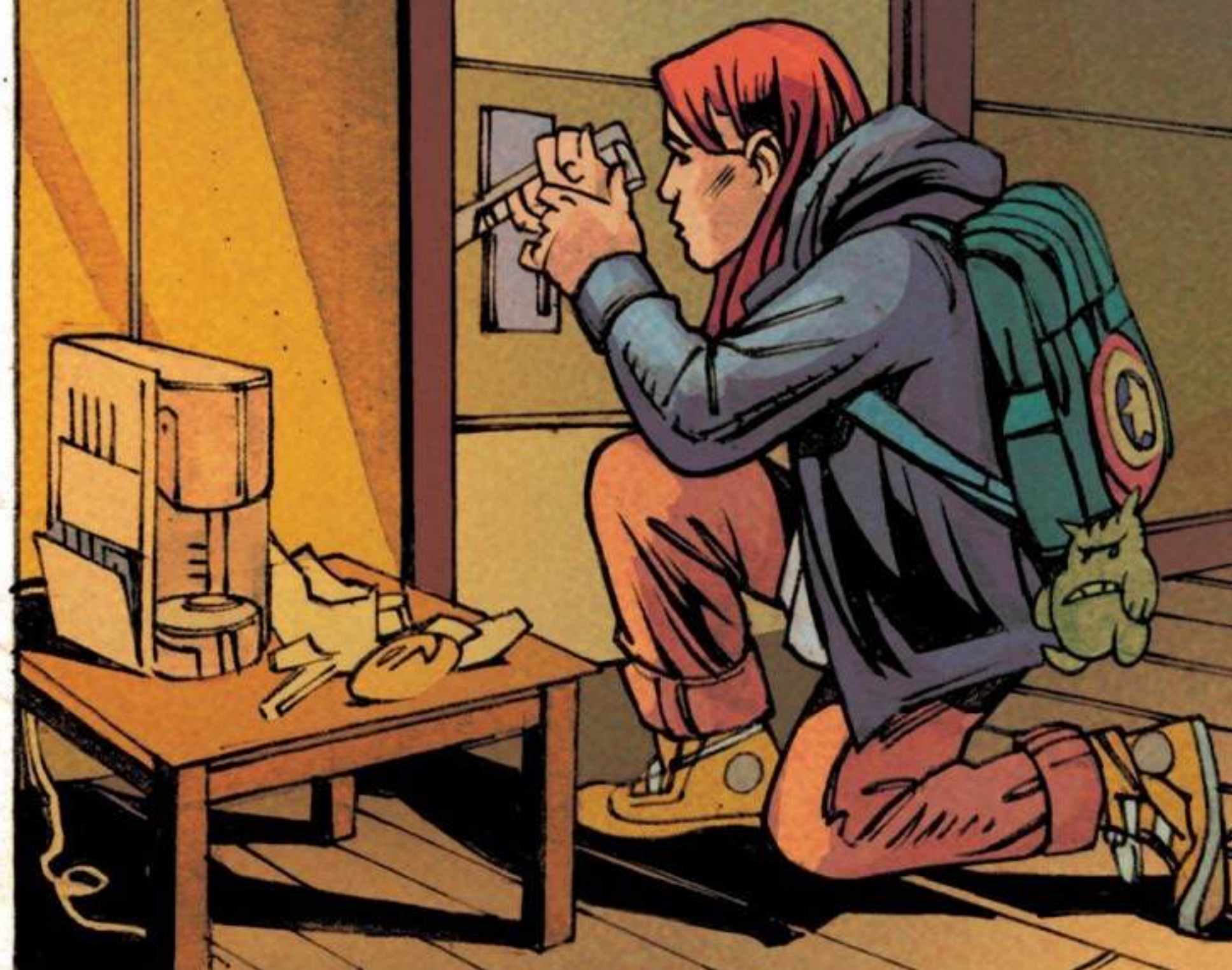
WE MUST
FIND NEW WAYS
TO PERSUADE
OUR GUEST,
TEELGET.

BRING
THE GIRL.

AND IF
HE IS YET
UNPERSUADED,
CHARLENE TIDWELL
WILL DIE SUCH
A DEATH...



"...AS TO MAKE THE MOST
DEPRAVED DENIZENS OF THE
VOID WEEP WITH PITY."



SKRIK
SKRIK
SKRIK



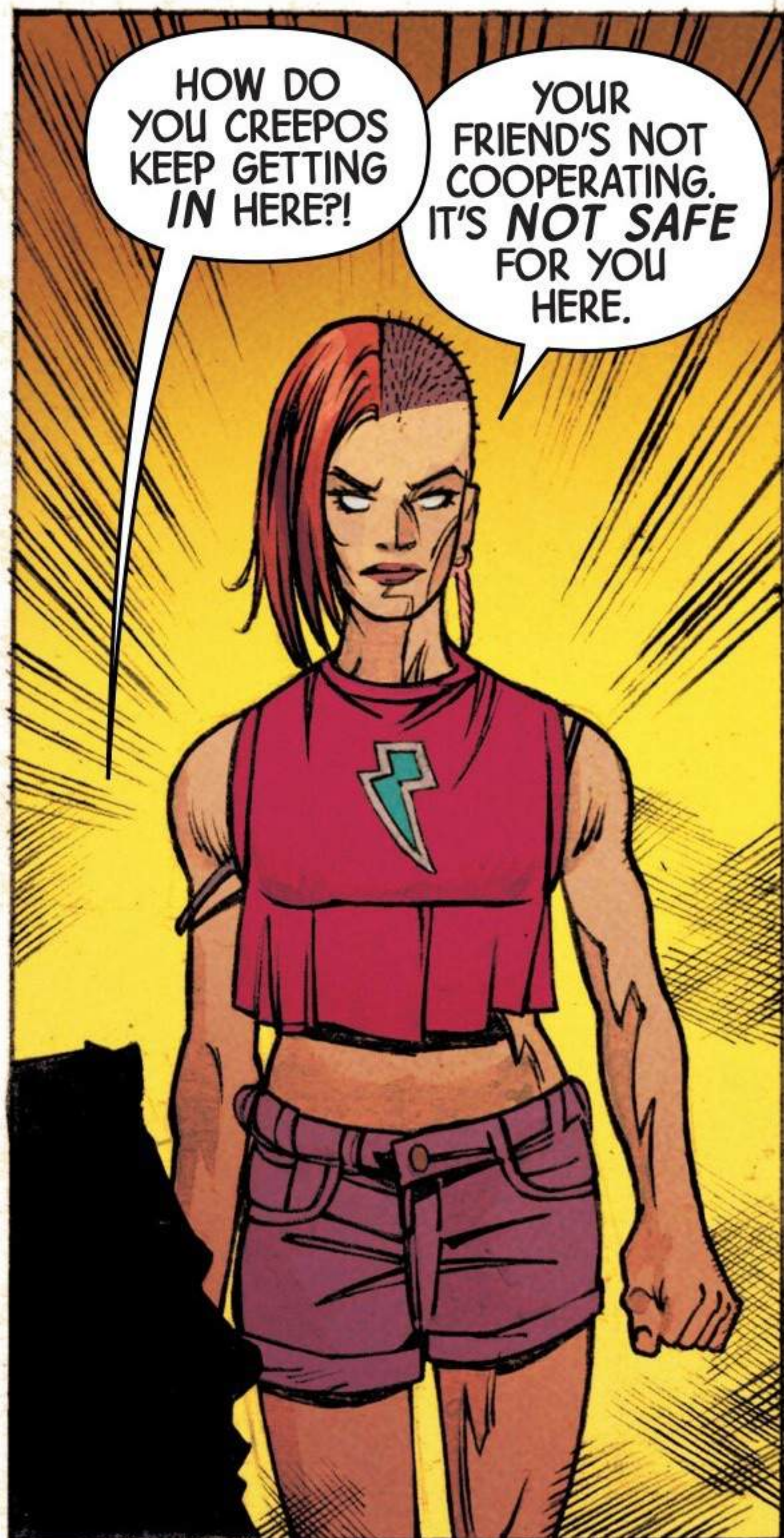
WE
NEED TO
GO.

AAAAHH!



HOW DO
YOU CREEPOS
KEEP GETTING
IN HERE?!

YOUR
FRIEND'S NOT
COOPERATING.
IT'S **NOT SAFE**
FOR YOU
HERE.



K
L
U
N
K

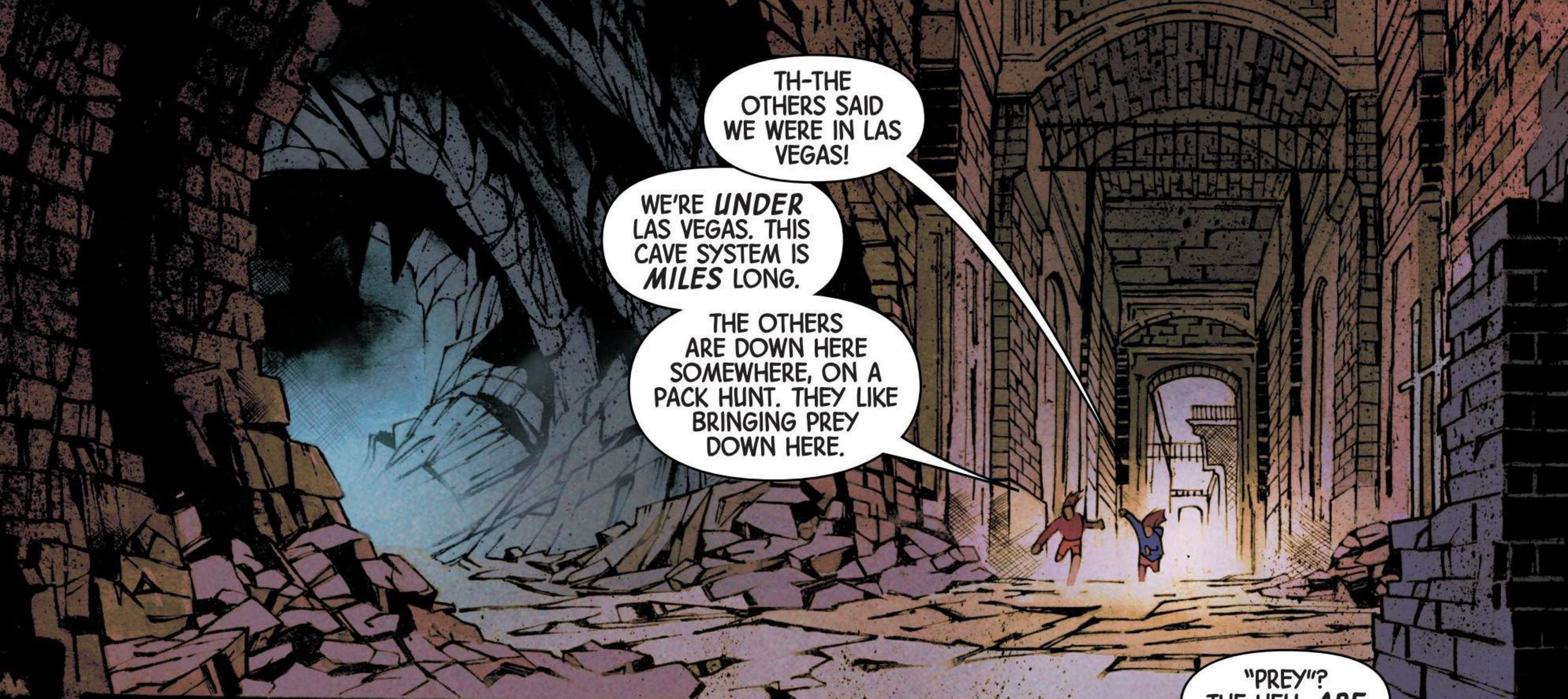


THEY'LL
PROBABLY
CATCH US...

...BUT I'M
NOT WAITING
AROUND FOR
THE NEXT
MOONRISE.

WHOA.





TH-THE
OTHERS SAID
WE WERE IN LAS
VEGAS!

WE'RE *UNDER*
LAS VEGAS. THIS
CAVE SYSTEM IS
MILES LONG.

THE OTHERS
ARE DOWN HERE
SOMEWHERE, ON A
PACK HUNT. THEY LIKE
BRINGING PREY
DOWN HERE.

"PREY"?
THE HELL *ARE*
YOU PEOPLE?



PREDATORS,
STUPID.



THAT'S THE CLOSEST WAY
OUT. WE RUN ALL THE WAY
TO THE END, THERE'S A
NATURAL WELL AND THEN
A STAIRWELL UP TO
THE STREET.

MAYBE WE'LL
GET LUCKY. I'M
HOPING THE HUNT'LL
KEEP THEM BUSY.

WHAT
ABOUT
HULK?



FORGET HULK.
HE'S *DEAD*, OR
ABOUT TO BE.

WHAT?!
WHAT DO YOU
MEAN, "*DEAD*"?
NOTHING CAN
KILL HULK!



WE DON'T
HAVE TIME FOR
THIS!!! YOU WERE *DEAD*,
AND NOW YOU'RE *ALIVE*!
TAKE THE WIN! GET
OUTTA HERE AND
LIVE YOUR--

%@\$& YOU!
I DON'T EVEN KNOW
YOU, AND I'M NOT
LEAVING
WITHOUT--

KATIE?

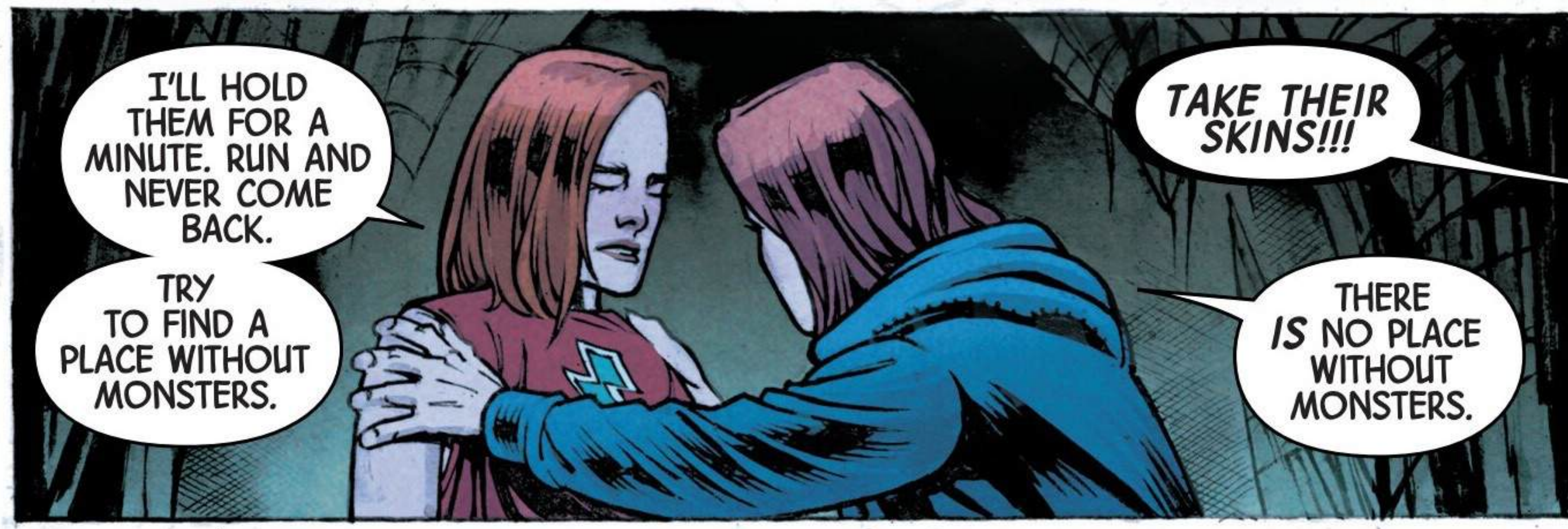


%\$@&.



WHAT DO
YOU THINK
YOU'RE--?

WHAT'S THE
MEATSACK
DOING OUT OF
HER CELL?



I'LL HOLD
THEM FOR A
MINUTE. RUN AND
NEVER COME
BACK.

TRY
TO FIND A
PLACE WITHOUT
MONSTERS.

**TAKE THEIR
SKINS!!!**

THERE
IS NO PLACE
WITHOUT
MONSTERS.



I
KNOW.



SHRRRRRIIPP

RUN.

GRRRAHHH

AAARRRNNNN

[illegible]

RUN.

GRRRAHHH

AAARRRNNNN

GONNA FIND YOU, HULK.

COMIN' FOR YOU, MEATSACK!!!

GONNA FIND YOU, HULK.

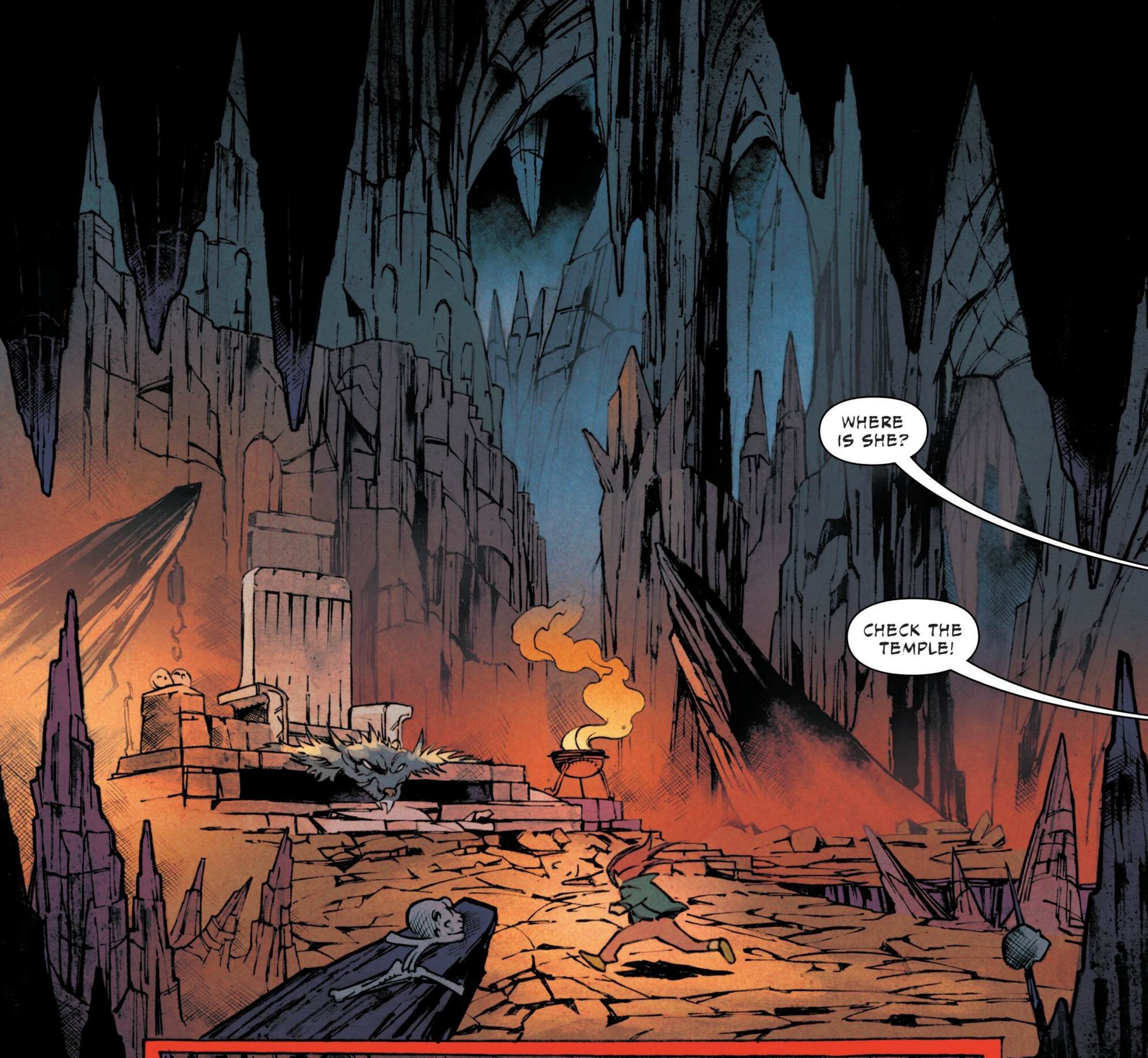
COMIN' FOR YOU, MEATSACK!!!

AAARRROOOOOOOOOO

GONNA GET US BOTH OUTTA THIS SOMEHOW.

AAARRROOOOOOOOOO

GONNA GET US BOTH OUTTA THIS SOMEHOW.



WHERE IS SHE?

CHECK THE TEMPLE!



→SNUFF←

I SMELL HER.

@%\$&



SKFFF



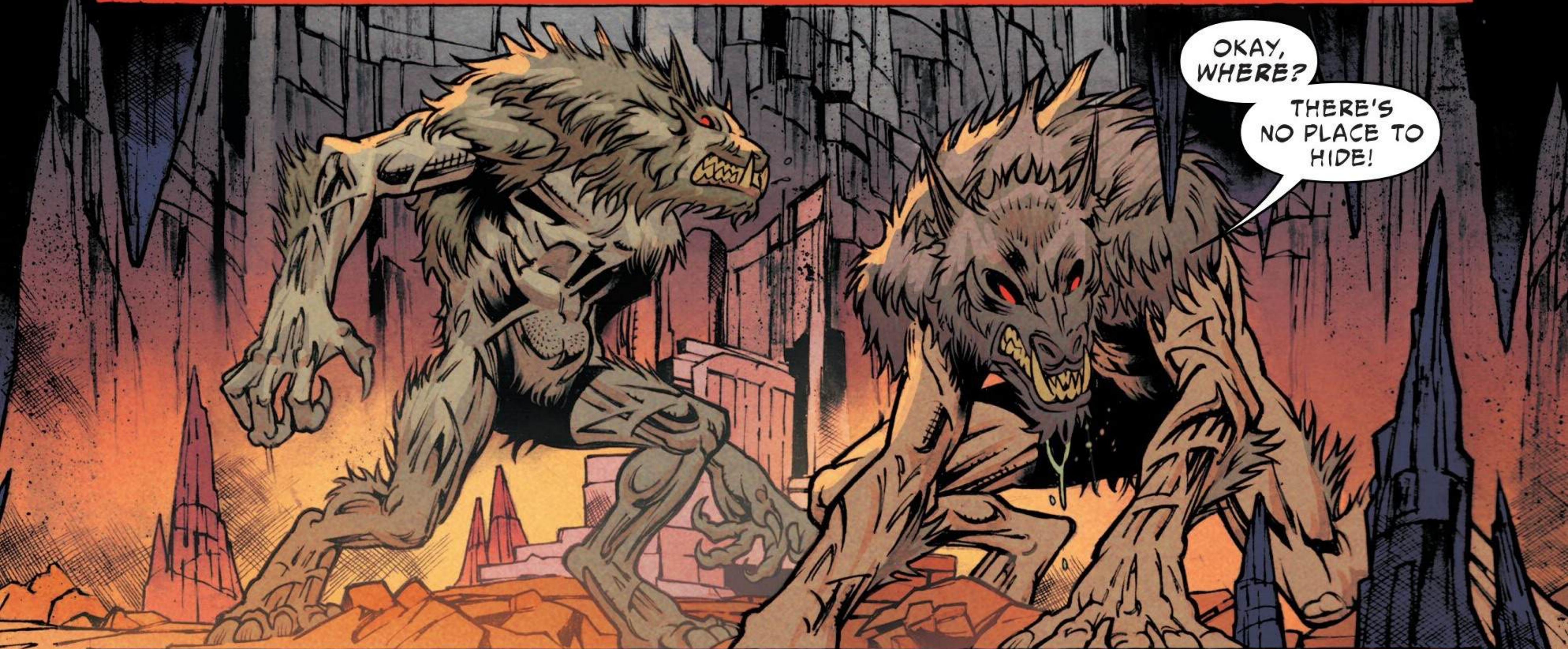
SHE'S
HERE. SHE'S
CLOSE.



MAYBE
SHE DOUBLED
BACK.

I'M
TELLING YOU,
SHE'S HERE.

PLEASE
GOD GET
ME OUTTA
THIS



OKAY,
WHERE?

THERE'S
NO PLACE TO
HIDE!



GOTTA
FIND HULK AND
GET OUTTA
THIS

PLEASE
GOD DON'T LET
ME GET RIPPED APART
BY #%\$&'IN'
WEREWOLVES



PLEASE
GOD HELP
ME

HELP ME
FINALLY BE
STRONG



INCREDIBLE HULK #16 DISCO DAZZLER VARIANT BY EDWIN GALMON & FEDERICO BLEE





DAUGHTER
OF MAN, YOU
FORSOOK ESCAPE
TO PRAY FOR
MY FAVOR

YOUR
PRAYER IS
HEARD, MY
FAVOR
GIVEN

BRING ME BLOOD
I WILL GIVE YOU STRENGTH

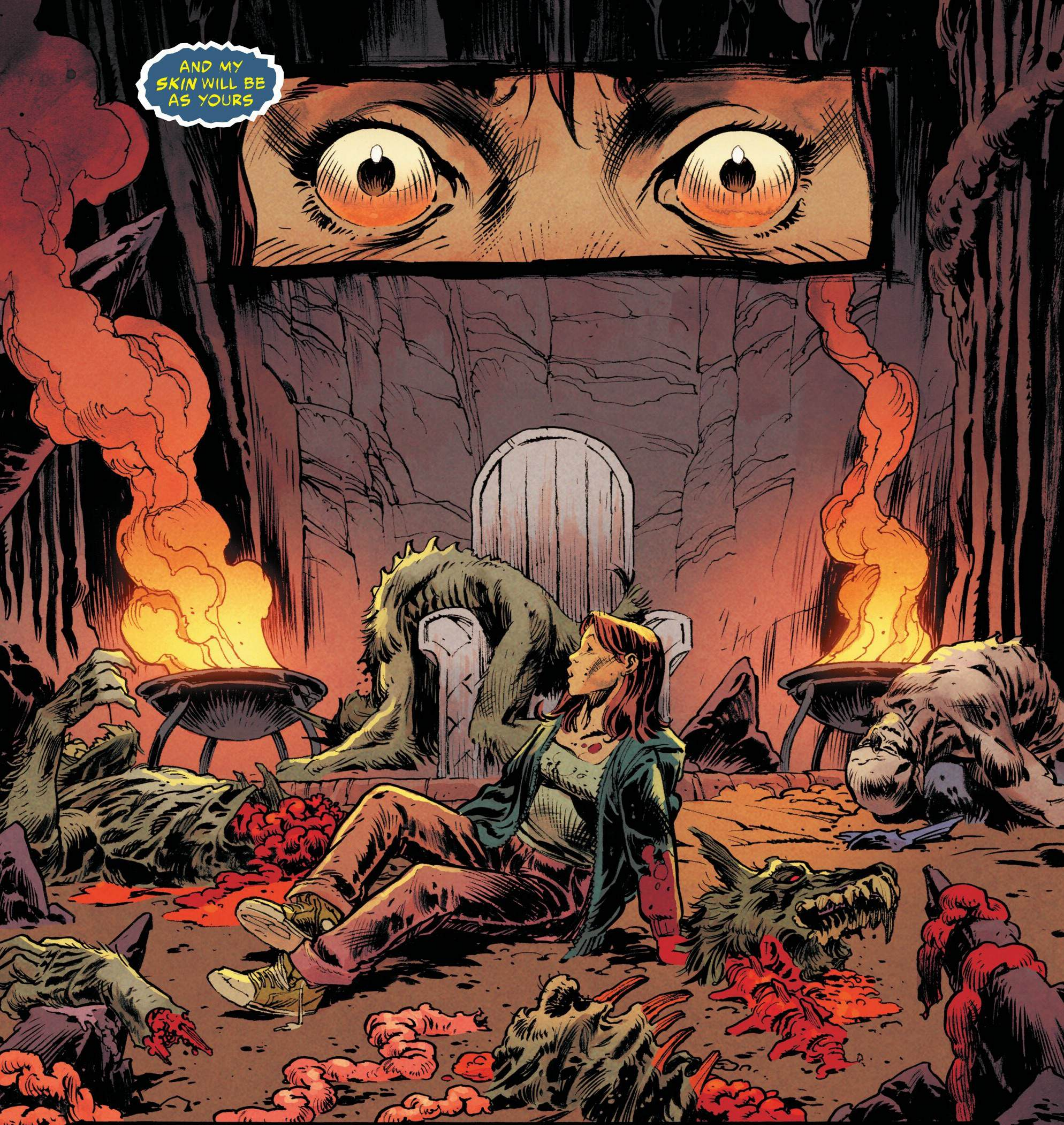
BRING ME FLESH
I WILL GIVE YOU LIFE

BRING
ME YOUR
COURAGE

YOUR
FERVOR

YOUR
SAVAGERY

AND MY
SKIN WILL BE
AS YOURS



"WHOSE
POWER
PROTECTS
YOU?"





TELL ME,
BANNER, AND
YOUR TORMENT
WILL END.



FOR ALL
OF MAN'S MANY
FRAILTIES...



...I AM OFTEN
IMPRESSED WITH
YOUR CREATIVE
MIND FOR
TORTURE.



BUT
EVEN IN
THIS...



...ELDEST
HAS MUCH TO
TEACH YOU.



STILL, IF
YOUR OWN
AGONY WILL
NOT SWAY
YOU...

LET ME
GO, YOU
FREAKS! OR
HULK AND ME'RE
GONNA--

OH MY
GOD.



BANNER?
HULK?! WHAT
DID THEY DO
TO--

STUPID...
KID.



DON'T
NEED YOUR
HELP.
SHOULD'VE...
RUN.



YOU'RE...
YOU'RE
ELDEST.

JUST SO.
THE ELDEST
OF ALL THINGS
PROFANE, BE
THEY BEAST,
MAN, GOD OR
DEVIL.

WHAT HAVE
YOU TO SAY, IN
THE PRESENCE OF
ONE WHO WITNESSED
THE KINDLING OF
THE SUN?

THAT
YOU'RE A
@%\$&@.

AND HULK'S
GONNA KICK
YOUR @%\$&@
ASS.



»NNK«

YOU ARE IN
THE TEMPLE OF
LYCANA, LITTLE WRETCH.
SAINT OF ALL
SKINWALKERS.

EACH FULL
MOON, LYCANA
CHOSES A
MORTAL VESSEL.
TO EAT WHAT THEY
WOULD, BED WHO
THEY WOULD, KILL
WHAT THEY
WOULD.

WHICH OF
YOU WOULD
NEXT WEAR
LYCANA'S
SKIN?

ME,
ELDEST,
PLEASE!

I'LL EAT
THE GIRL'S
HEART!

I'LL
WEAR HER
INSIDES!

YOU.
FETCH THE
GODSKIN.

YES,
ELDEST.

THINK YOU--
GGG--SCARE
ME WITH...YOUR
CREEPY WEREWOLVES
AND...BIG TALK?



YOU AMUSE ME, GIRL.

WEAK EVEN FOR A MORTAL CHILD, YET YOU SPEAK AS IF YOU WERE HULK YOURSELF.

→KAFF←
→COUGH←

I AM.

HULK WOULDN'T CARE THAT YOU'RE BIGGER, OLDER, STRONGER.

HE WOULDN'T CARE THAT THERE'S A TON O' YOU. AND I DON'T, EITHER.

BRING IT ON.

NO MATTER HOW BAD YOU HURT ME...EVEN IF I LOSE...EVEN IF YOU KILL ME...&#\$@ YOU ANYWAY.

'CAUSE I'M GONNA HURT YOU, TOO.





YOUR FINAL
CHANCE, FRACTURED
SON. SURRENDER YOUR
FLESH, OR WATCH
THE CALF DIE.

I TOLD
YOU...I
CAN'T.

PLEASE...
PLEASE DON'T
DO TH--

ELDEST?



MAY I
DO IT?

PLEASE?

FORGIVE
ME, LITTLE
DUCK, I NEARLY
FORGOT.

YOU
FANCY THE
GIRL, DON'T
YOU?



YES,
ELDEST. SHE
SMELLS MOST
PLEASANT.

GO ON,
THEN.



OH, THANK
YOU, ELDEST.
THANK YOU.

DON'T
WASTE THE
BLOOD, MIND. SHE'S
MORTAL, SO YOU'LL
ONLY HAVE THE
ONE TIME.

WHICH FACE
DO YOU WANT
TO BE THE LAST
SHE SEES?



I HAVE
JUST THE ONE,
ELDEST.



JUST
THE
ONE.



D-DADDY.

WHAT'RE
YOU... HOW'RE
YOU--

THOUGHT
YOU KILLED
ME, DIDN'T
YOU, GIRL?

YOU'LL
NEVER BE
FREE O'
ME.



IT'S A
SKINWALKER,
CHARLIE.

THEY CAN
TAKE THE FORM...
OF PEOPLE THEY'VE
CONSUMED.



DO YOU
UNDERSTAND?



YOU...

...WHAT?

ELDEST!!!

IT'S GONE!!!

THE GODSKIN OF LYCANA...

...IT'S GONE!!!

GAOKROU

YOU KILLED MY DADDY...

...AND NOW I'M GONNA KILL YOU.

...YOU KILLED HIM.

CHARLIE...
...NO

HEH.

GET 'EM, KID.

GA

GAOKROU







HULK...
...NOW.



SHE'S
DISTRACTED...
...AND
CHARLIE NEEDS
US.

KA-GRICK



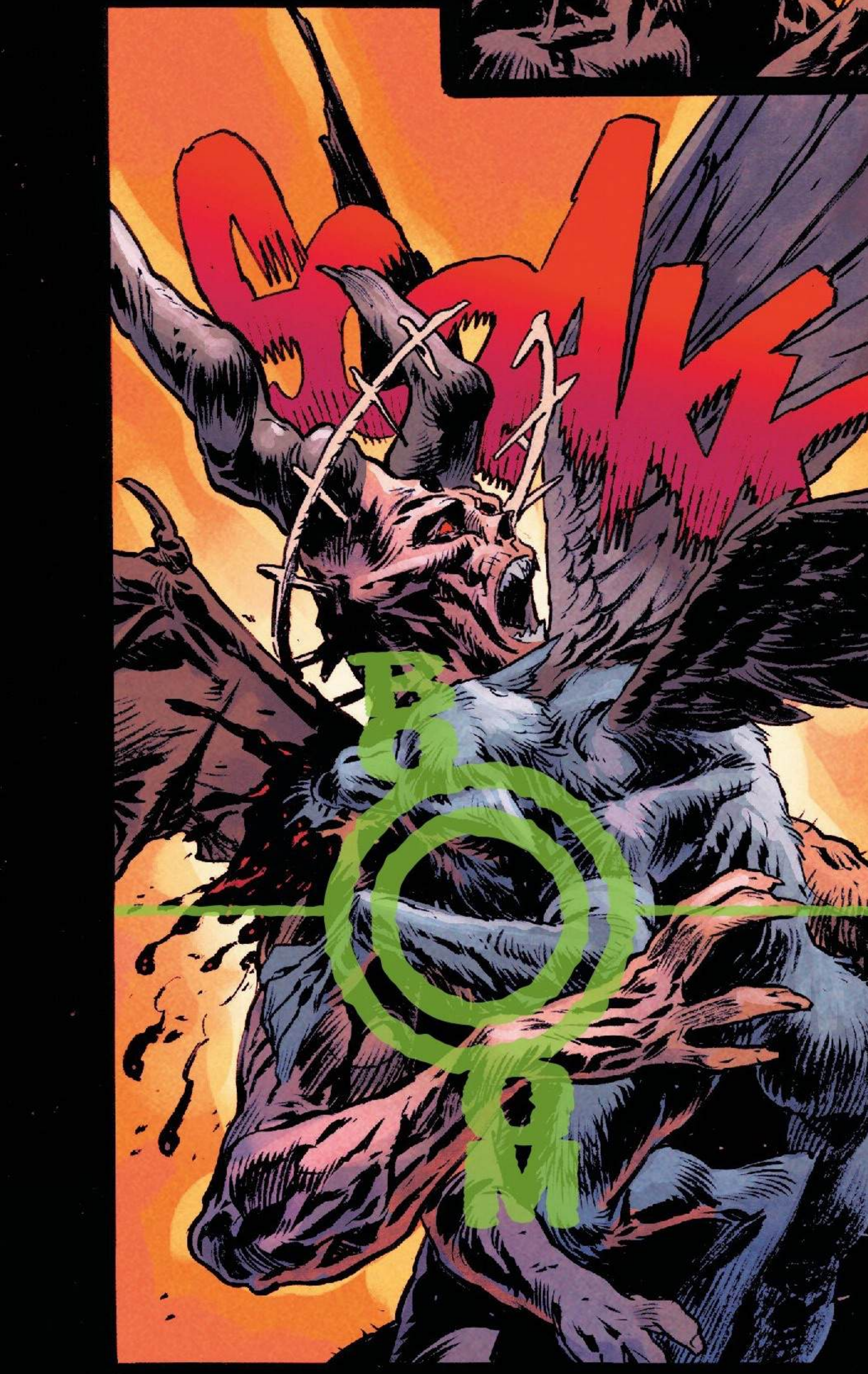
YOU MURDER
MY PETS, WEARING
THE SKIN OF MY
OWN CHILD?!?



I AM THE
MISTRESS OF ALL
THINGS PROFANE,
LITTLE BEAST...



...AS YOU
WILL NOW
LEARN.





BUT
HULK IS
STRONGEST.





RRRRRRR000000 * 000000000000

HHHHHHH

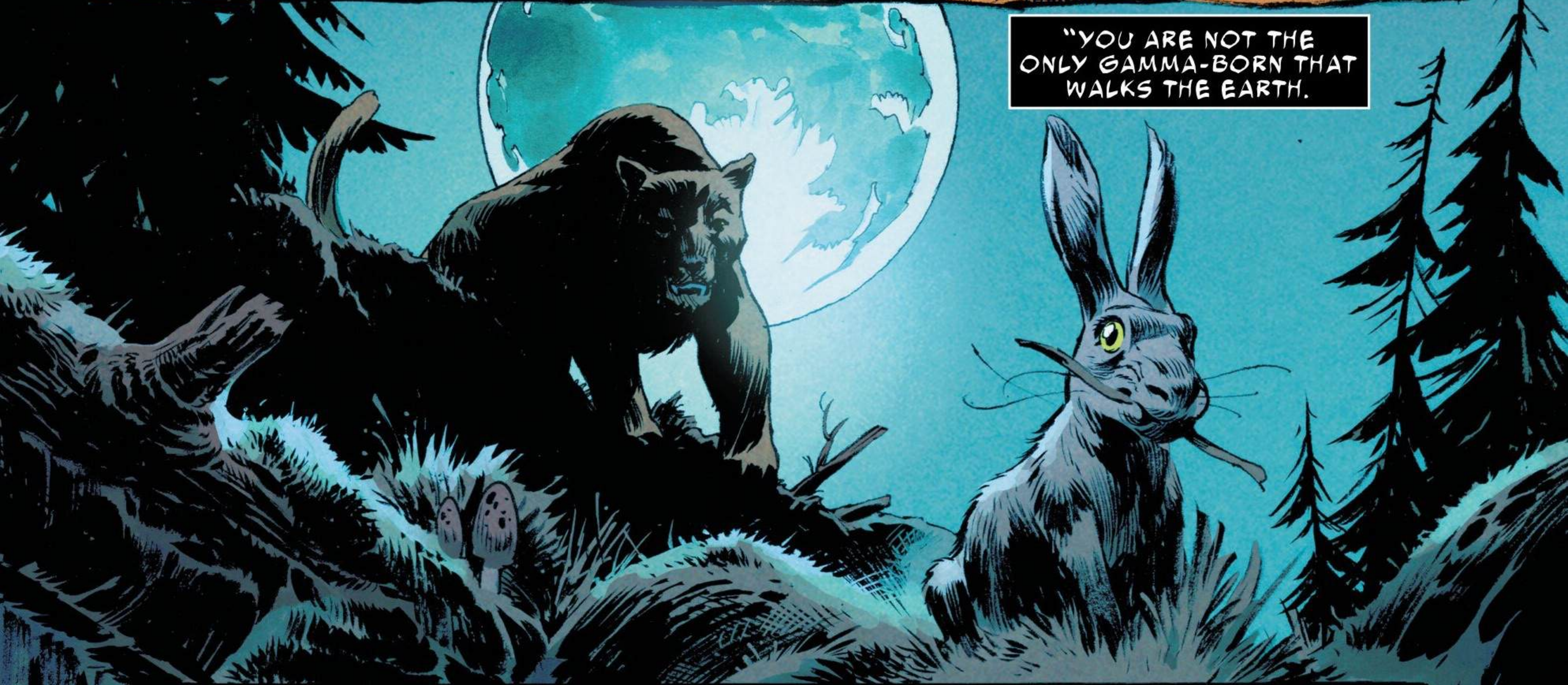
No Smoking

RRRRRRR000000 000000000000





"I WILL AVENGE
MYSELF AND ALL
MY KIN UPON YOU."



"YOU ARE NOT THE
ONLY GAMMA-BORN THAT
WALKS THE EARTH."



"WHEN MY MOTHER BURNS
THIS WORLD TO A CINDER,
IT WILL NOT BE HER NAME
THE MORTALS CURSE."



"IT WILL BE
YOURS."

NEXT: WEREWOLF BY NIGHT!

THE REMEMBRANCES OF ELDEST LYCANA, FIRST OF THE SKINWALKERS

ALL FLESH born of Earth is my birthright. Many forms have I known, many children have I borne. But of all my offspring, my favorite was ever my beloved Lycana.

In an age long past upon a snowy peak, a battle was fought between gods and giants. When the battle was ended, the giants had lost many warriors, but the gods only one: a black-maned berserker named Agmundr, who favored the company of beasts and could take their shape when he wished. The blow that killed him flung Agmundr far from the field of battle, and long did his fellows search for him. After three days and nights an ice storm made their search impossible, and at last the gods left their fallen comrade to the mountain, his broken corpse hidden by the ice and snow.

All this I watched with gladness, for it was I who lured the little gods to that mountain, that the giants might find and slay them. But the gods proved capable, and when they had left our realm for their sunlit halls, in raven's form I found Agmundr's corpse, feasted on his heart, and defiled the flesh that remained. I felt the warmth of his essence pass into me, and by that spring that warmth had become a beautiful, cunning little cub of wing and fang: my little LYCANA.

Lycana grew strong of limb and fierce of spirit, a tireless hunter and merciless killer. But her greatest gift was that of skinchanging: She could take the form of those she had consumed. This made her formidable indeed, and when she was old enough I set her loose in the mountains where Agmundr was slain. She ran among the beasts of the wild, flew among the birds in the sky, walked among mortal men, and they none the wiser. All living things were her prey, and the men of the mountain named her the VALRAVN, and spoke of her ever in abject terror.

So far spread the tales of Lycana that in time, the eyes of the gods fell upon her. In her coat they recognized the black mane of their fallen comrade Agmundr, and though they knew nothing of me in those days, they knew that their fellow's flesh had been profaned through some dark rite. In a mighty thunderstorm, the gods sent a golden-haired champion to the mountain to redeem their fallen comrade, and to rid their worshippers of the fearsome valravn that plagued them.

Through storm and hurricane, across ocean and continent did Lycana and the champion fight. Mountains were felled, valleys were buried, forests and jungles were laid to ruin. Much of the god's blood did Lycana spill, but in the end the brute's hammer found its mark, and at last my beautiful Lycana fell dead from the sky, falling to Earth in a desert in a faraway land.

Lycana's body was found by a tribe of cave-dwelling mortals. A stronger, more warlike people had driven them from their hunting grounds, and they were starving. Though they found Lycana's



shape strange and frightening, in their hunger they skinned her, ate her flesh, and burned her entrails for warmth. That night one of the mortals draped Lycana's pelt over his mate, and prayed to Lycana in gratitude. "Thank you for the gift of your life," he said. "May your flesh make us strong, may your hide keep us warm, may we honor your sacrifice with victory over our enemies."

When the sun rose, the mortals woke to find their cookfire heaped tall with the bloody bones of their enemies. Though she remembered little, the girl who had slept beneath Lycana's skin was painted in their blood, and carried a strength and speed in her flesh beyond any mortal. She had become Lycana's vessel, a living form through which my child might hunt again. The others, too, had received Lycana's gift of skinchanging through the flesh they had consumed.

Lycana's pelt became the GODSKIN, the object of the cavemen's worship, and the cave became her temple. In times of greatest need, a champion was chosen to wear the godskin, and Lycana returned to devour the enemies of her children the skinwalkers. When Lycana had eaten her fill, the champion would return the godskin to the temple and sacrifice their own flesh to the tribe, making Lycana's children stronger still.

To be a bearer of the godskin is to touch divinity: to hunt one's fill, to know fear and worship, to indulge one's truest appetites. But for mortals, such power could only ever be fleeting. In the end, all gods drink blood...my beautiful Lycana most of all.

This say I, Eldest of the Mother of Horrors.



...BUT ASK
AND YOU SHALL
RECEIVE!

AMADEUS CHO,
A.K.A. THE TOTALLY
AWESOME HULK,
A.K.A. BRAWN, A.K.A.
SELF-DESCRIBED BEST
FRIEND OF BRUCE
BANNER.

BRUCE
BANNER,
A.K.A. THE
INCREDIBLE
HULK.

HORRIFYING UNDEAD
MONSTROSITIES
DETERMINED TO KILL
THE HULK BECAUSE
THAT'S WHAT'S WHAT
THESE DAYS.

CRASH

FOUL-WEATHER FRIENDS



BANNER?

A-
AMADEUS?



SKRRAAKT

HA HA!

GREW OUT
YOUR *HAIR*,
HUH? I LIKE
IT!

YOU...
YOU...



I
KNOW.

LOOK. I'M
SORRY. I WAS
KIND OF A *JERK*
THE LAST TIME
WE MET.*

*IMMORTAL HULK #26.
--JUSTIFYIN' JORDAN



BUT
YOU WERE
WEIRD!

I MEAN,
YOU DECLARED
WAR ON
HUMANITY!

YOU...YOU
KINDA FREAKED
ME OUT.



AND THEN I
WAS RUNNING AROUND
WITH JIMMY WOO AND A
BUNCH A OTHER FOLKS
FIGHTING *MONSTERS*
AND *GODS* AND
NAMOR, HA HA!

SHAKOOM



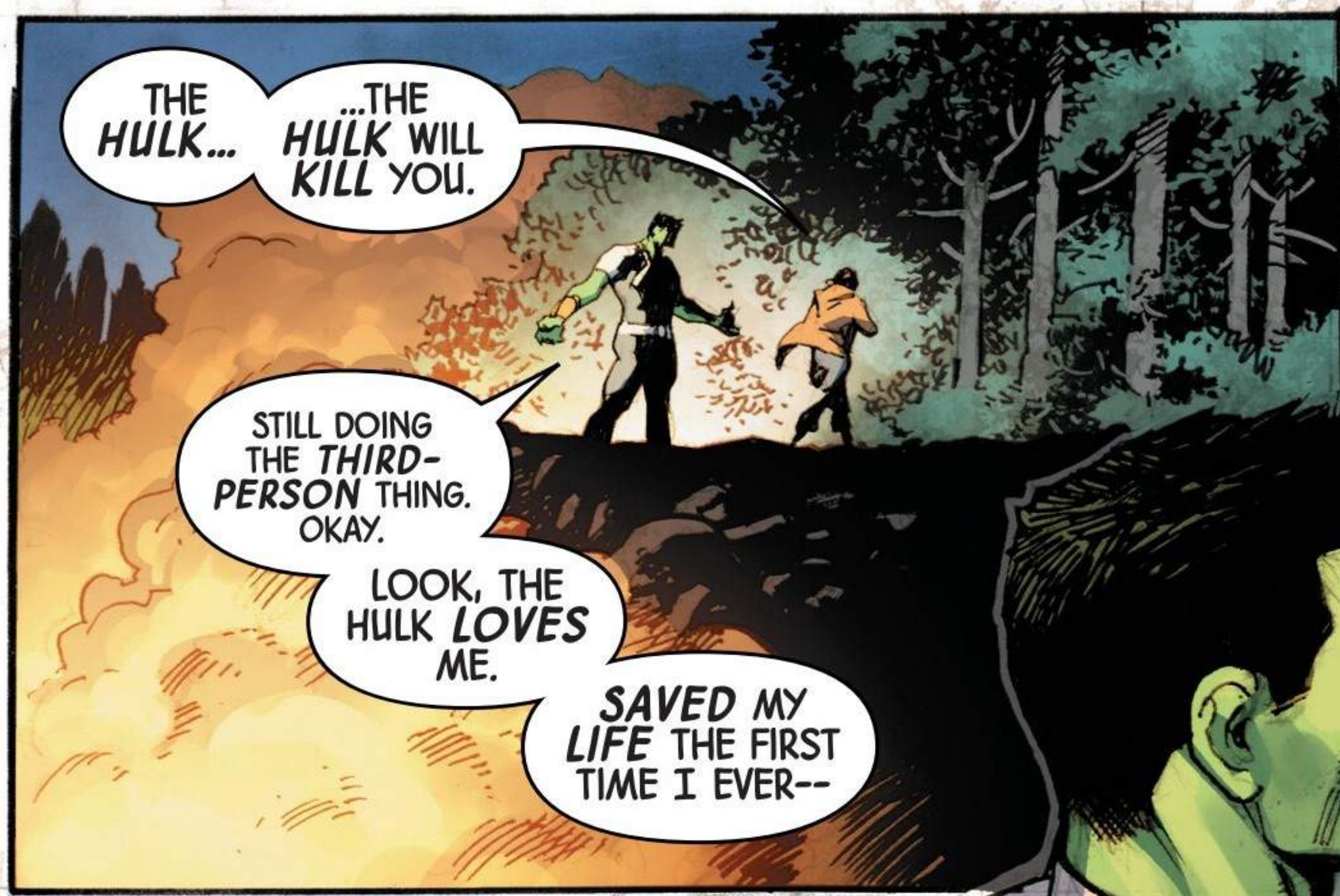
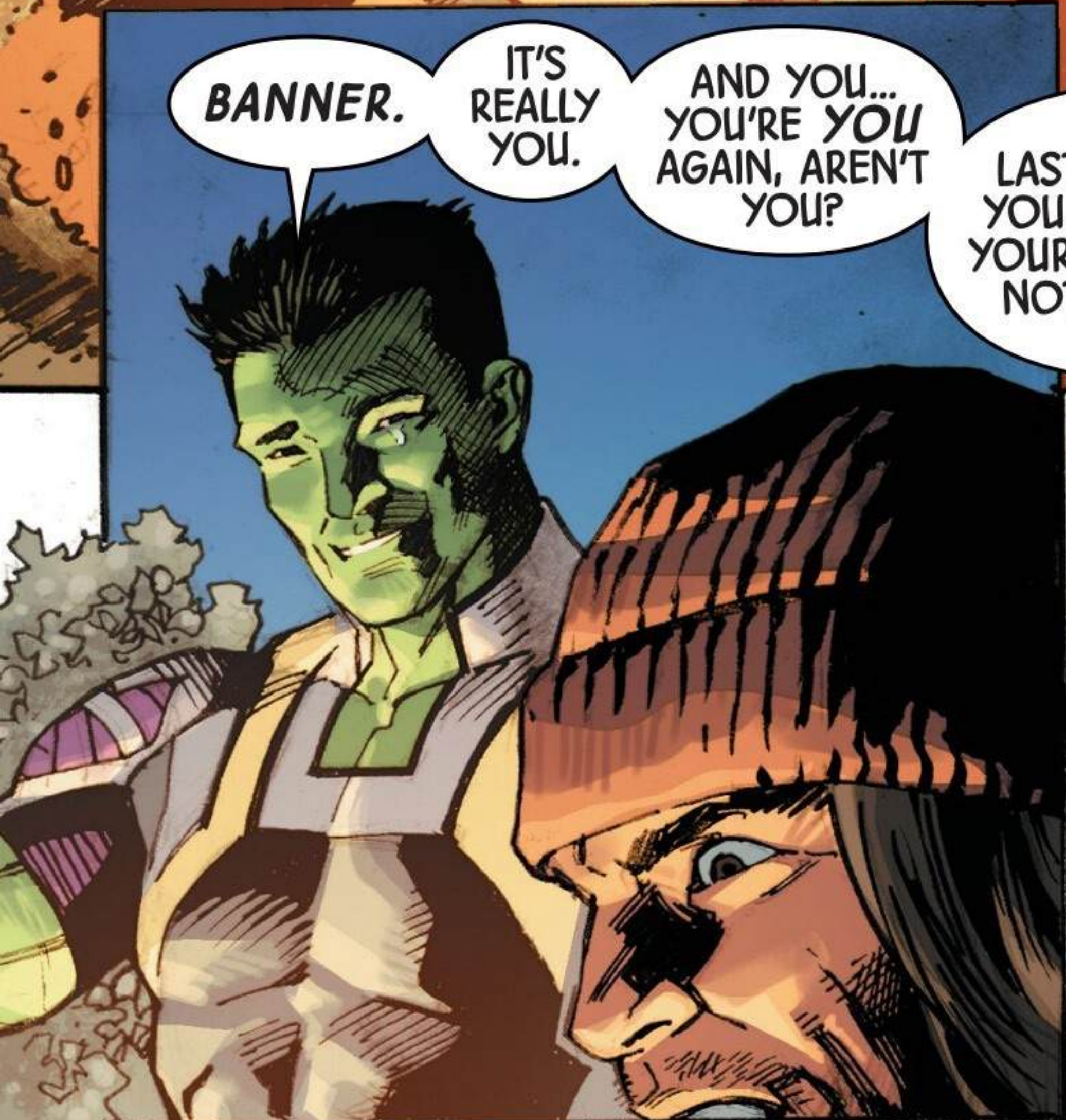
BUT THEN I
STARTED TO
HEAR THINGS.

THAT YOU WERE
IN *TROUBLE*.
HUNTED BY *GHOSTS*
AND *ZOMBIES*
AND...

SKRRAAKKT



FWOOSH





BANNER!

COME
ON, WE'VE BEEN
OVER THIS ALL
BEFORE.

THE *HULK*
DOESN'T KILL. BECAUSE
YOU DON'T KILL. UNLESS
IT'S *SELF-DEFENSE*
OR *WAR* OR--

THIS *IS*
WAR.



A WAR
BETWEEN *ME*
AND *HIM*.

AND IF
YOU SIDE
WITH *ME*...

...AND
HE WINS...



HA HA
HA HA HA
HA!

...YOU'RE
DEAD!



BANNER...

...I KNOW
YOU THINK YOU
HAVE TO *PROTECT*
EVERYONE...

...BUT TAKE IT
FROM A FELLOW
HULK.

NO ONE
MAKES IT
ALONE...

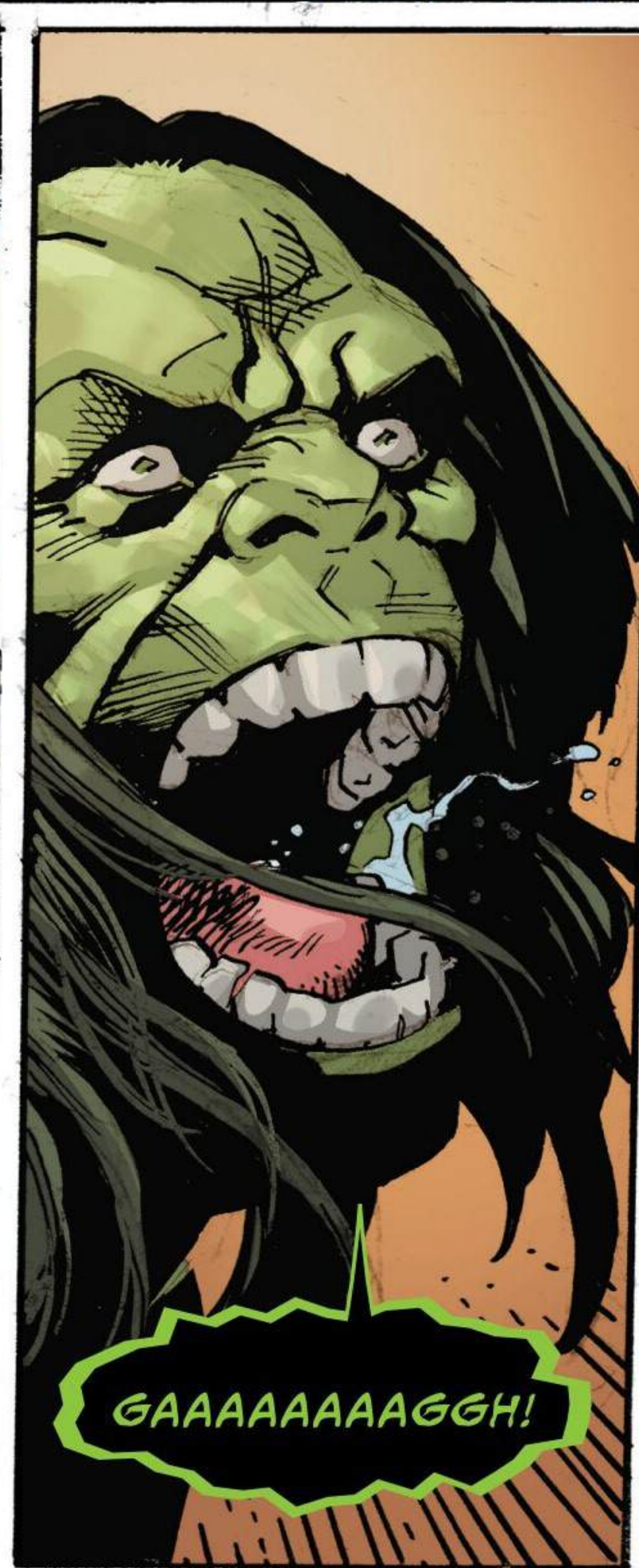


...NO
MATTER *HOW*
STRONG YOU
ARE.

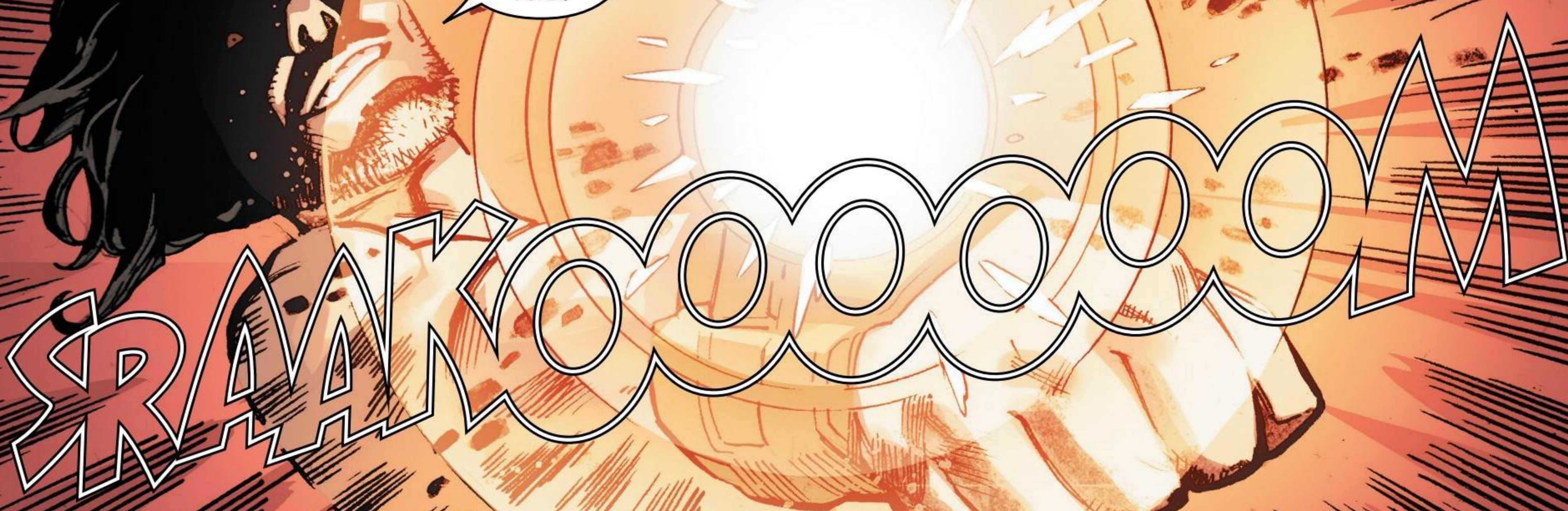
NO
ONE.

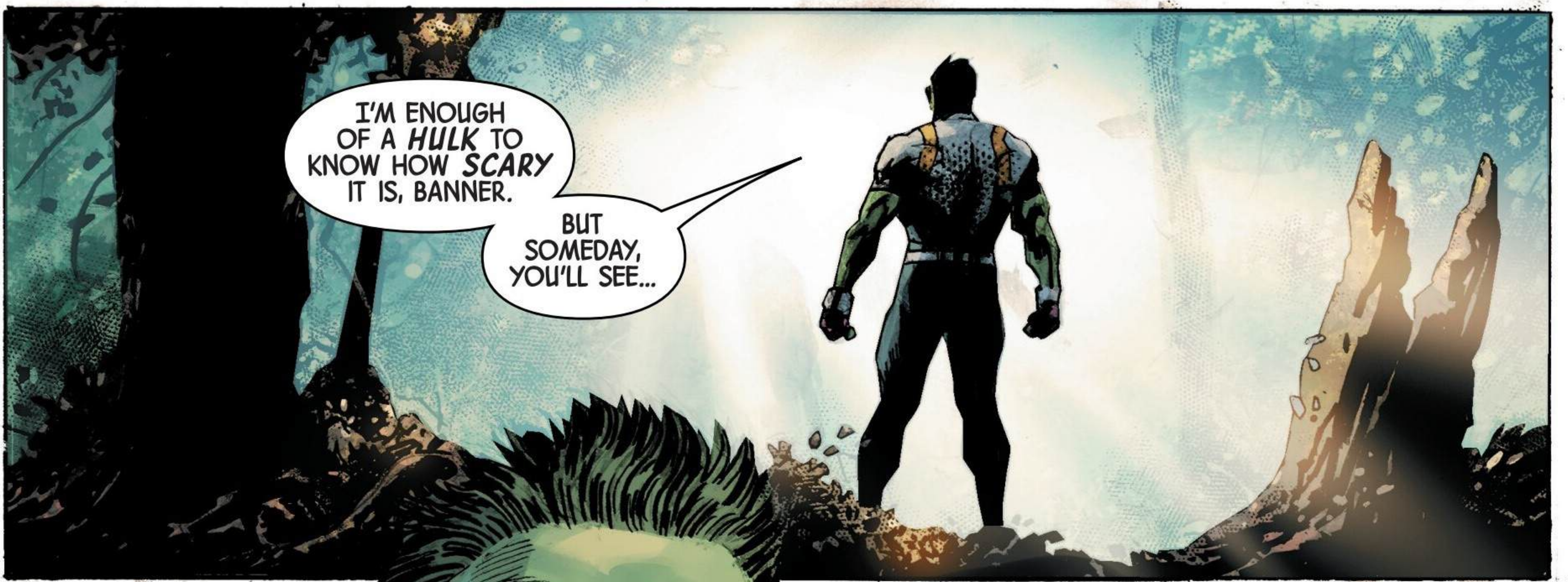
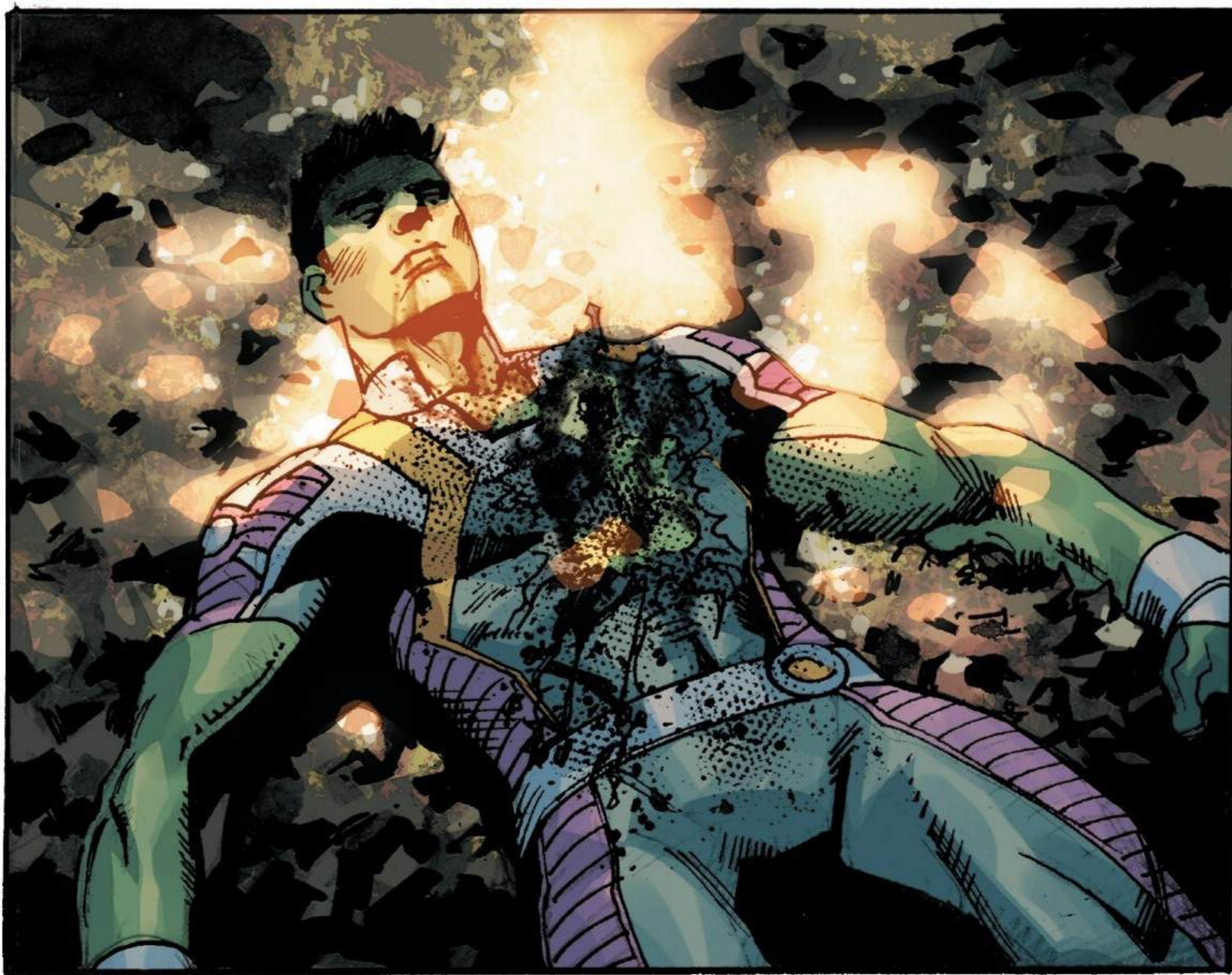
JUST
LET ME--



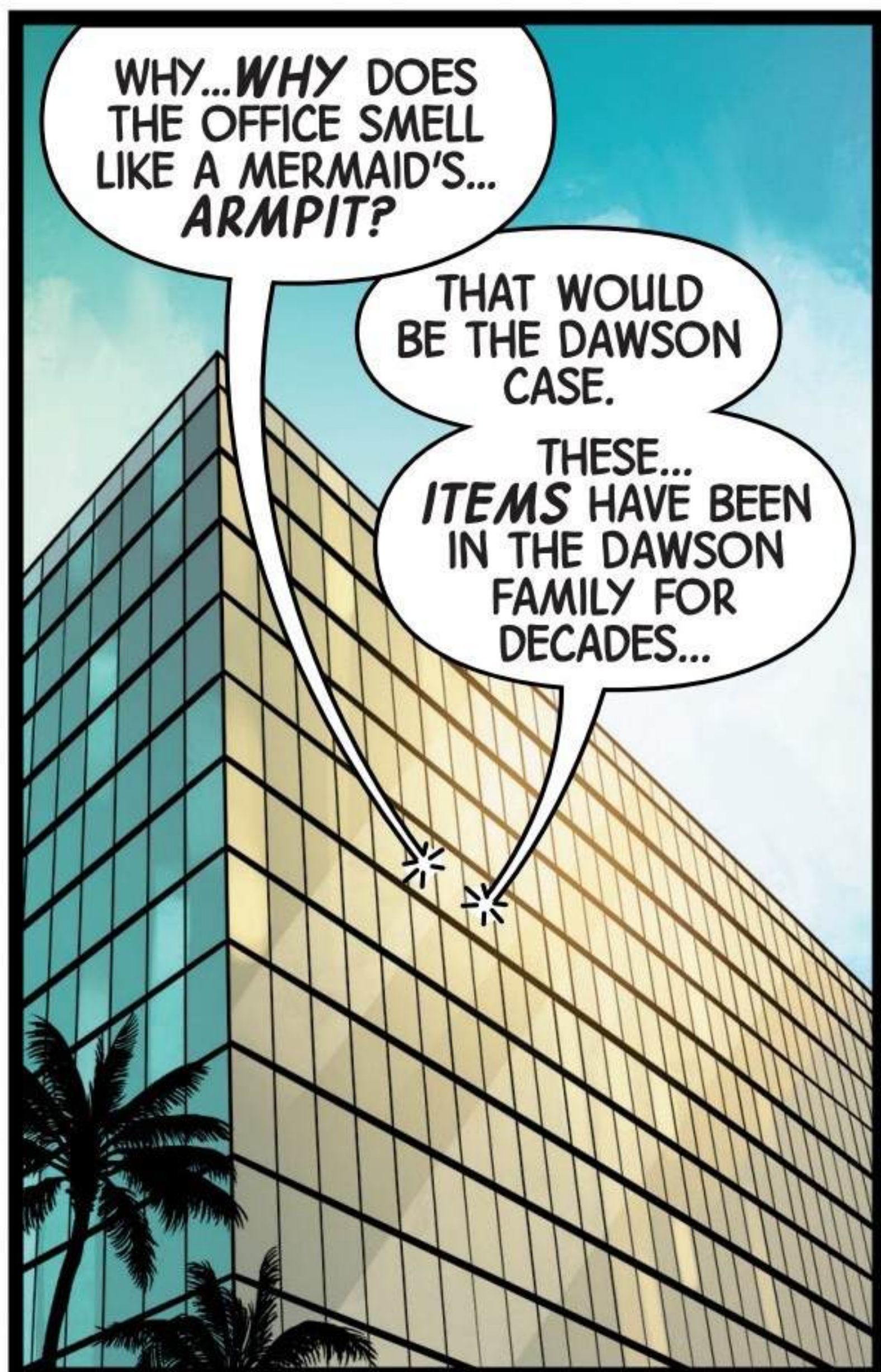






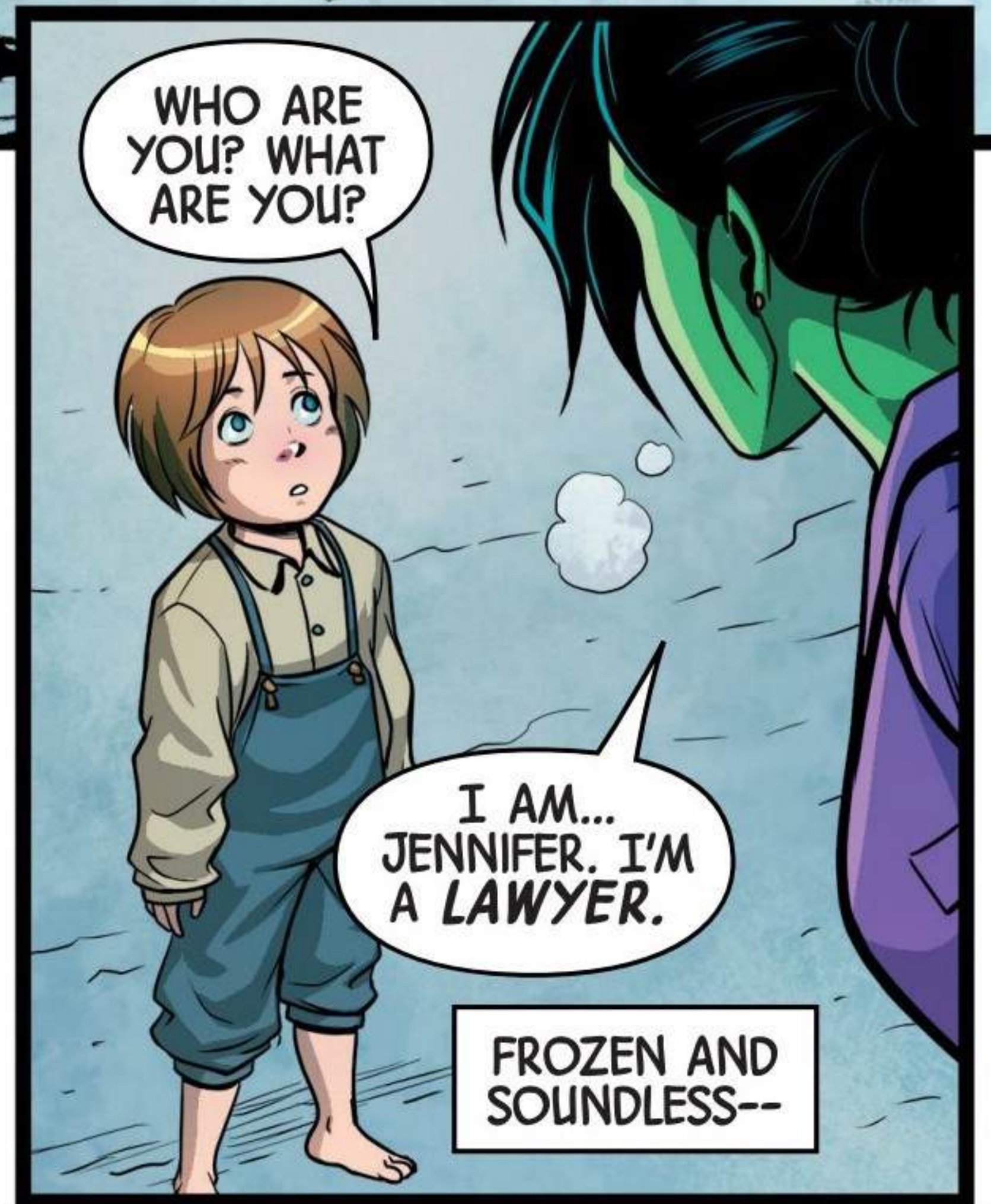


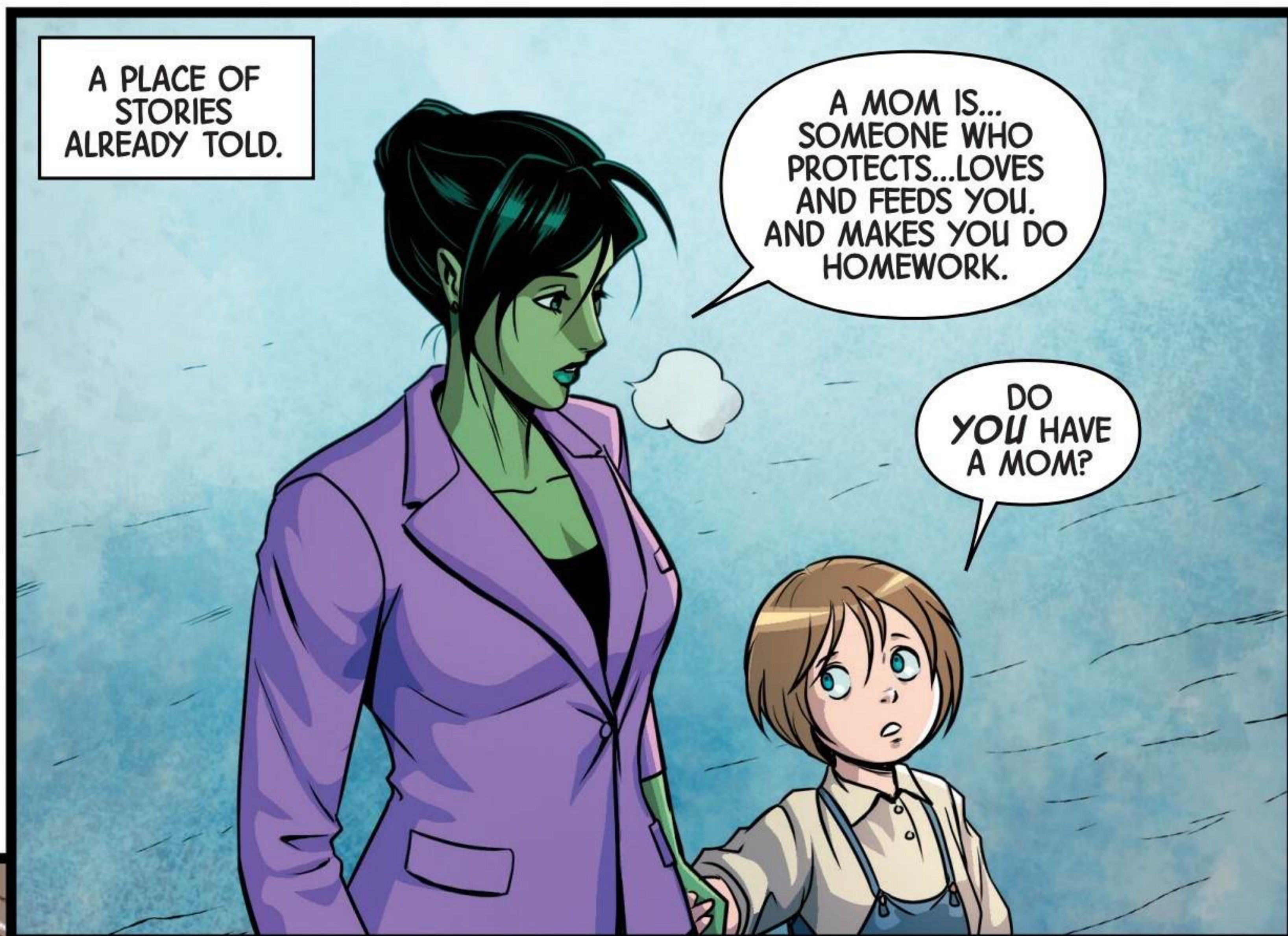
TO BE...
...HULKTINUED?





NIGHT ETERNAL





A PLACE OF
STORIES
ALREADY TOLD.

A MOM IS...
SOMEONE WHO
PROTECTS...LOVES
AND FEEDS YOU.
AND MAKES YOU DO
HOMEWORK.

DO
YOU HAVE
A MOM?



I DID...
SHE...

THE IMAGE FLASHES
UNWILLINGLY
THROUGH HER MIND.



THE CAR.
THE SCREAM.

NOOO!

THE LAST
MOMENT OF HER
MOTHER'S LIFE.



WHAT
WAS THAT?

WHAT?



THE MONSTER
THAT KILLED YOUR
MOM...YOU CALL IT...
A CAR. I HAVE NEVER
SEEN ANYTHING
LIKE THAT
BEFORE.

HOW DID
YOU--?

WHAT
IS THIS
PLACE?



AND HOW...
HOW DO I GET
OUT OF HERE?





IS THAT...
**HAROLD
DAWSON?**

HOW DO
YOU KNOW
THAT MAN?



DAWSON?
HE'S...WELL,
HE'S MY CLIENT,
I SUPPOSE.

NO, NO, NO...
HE IS A THIEF! IF
YOU WORK WITH
HIM...YOU HAVE
TO GO!



HEY! RELAX,
I DON'T--

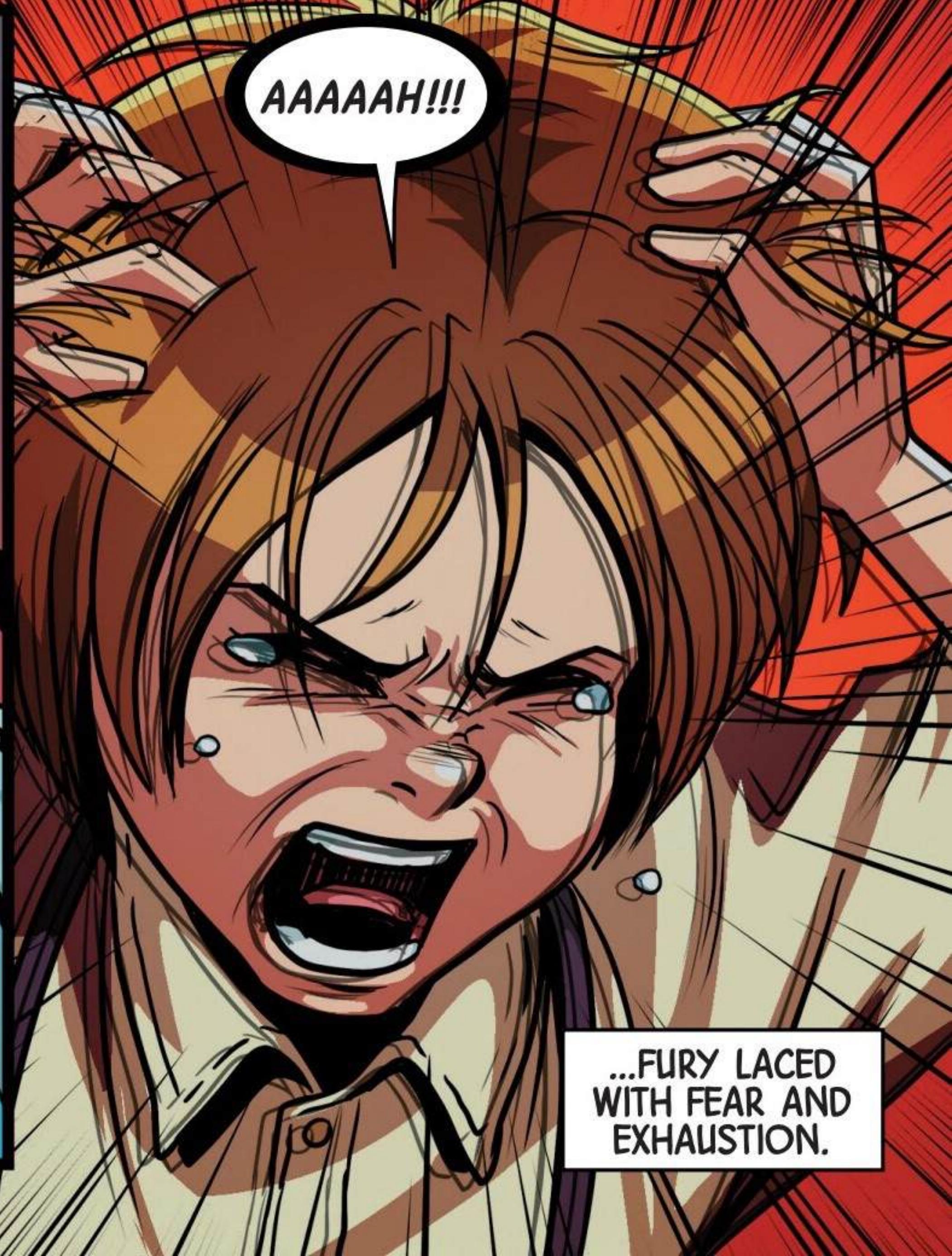
YOU
TRICKED
ME!

HIS ANGER
STAINS THE AIR...



...SHE BREATHES
IT IN...

YOU ARE
JUST LIKE
THE OTHER
ONES!



AAAAAH!!!

...FURY LACED
WITH FEAR AND
EXHAUSTION.

LIKE AN ANIMAL
ACTING UP IN
SELF-DEFENSE.

GOOD
GRIEF!

HE ATTACKS
WITH THE WORST
FEARS OF SOME
LONG-AGO
SAILOR...

WHAT
THE HELL?

...FOLLOWED
BY JEN'S OWN
WORST FEAR.

VRROOOOM

WITHIN THE CAR, SHE
HEARS THE ECHO OF HER
MOTHER'S LAST WORDS.

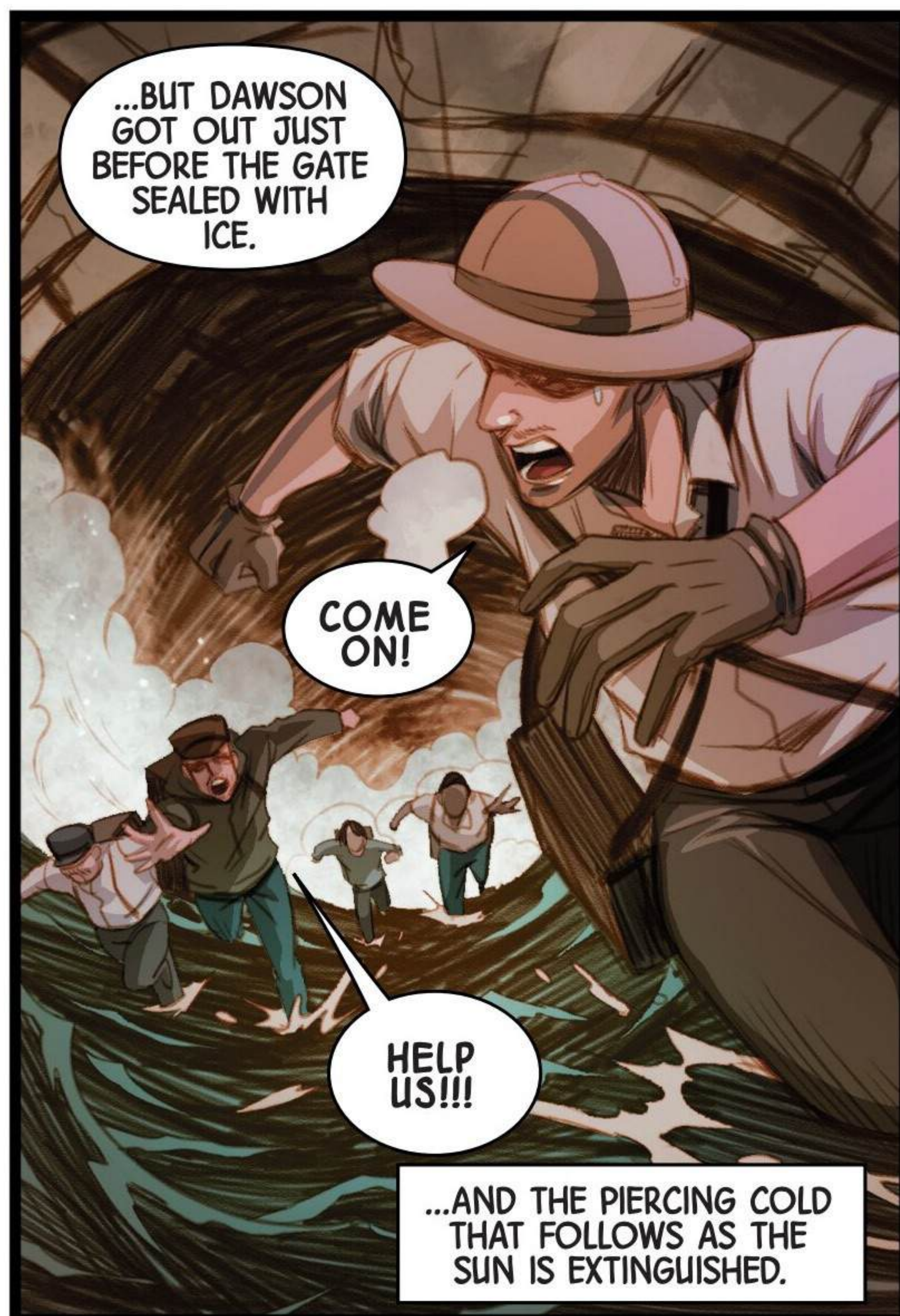
OOOFF!

STOP
THIS!

I KNOW
YOU'RE TRYING
TO SCARE ME...

...BUT I AM NOT
YOUR ENEMY. I'M NOT
GOING TO HURT YOU...I'M
NOT GOING TO STEAL
ANYTHING.

NO...
NO, NO,
NO.





HE
TOOK YOUR
SUN.

YES...AND
MY LIGHT IS BUT A
REFLECTION OF HERS.
IT WILL SOON
BE GONE.

(SHE KNOWS
WHERE THE WARMTH
COMES FROM NOW.)



SO...
THIS PLACE IS
HENUNDER.

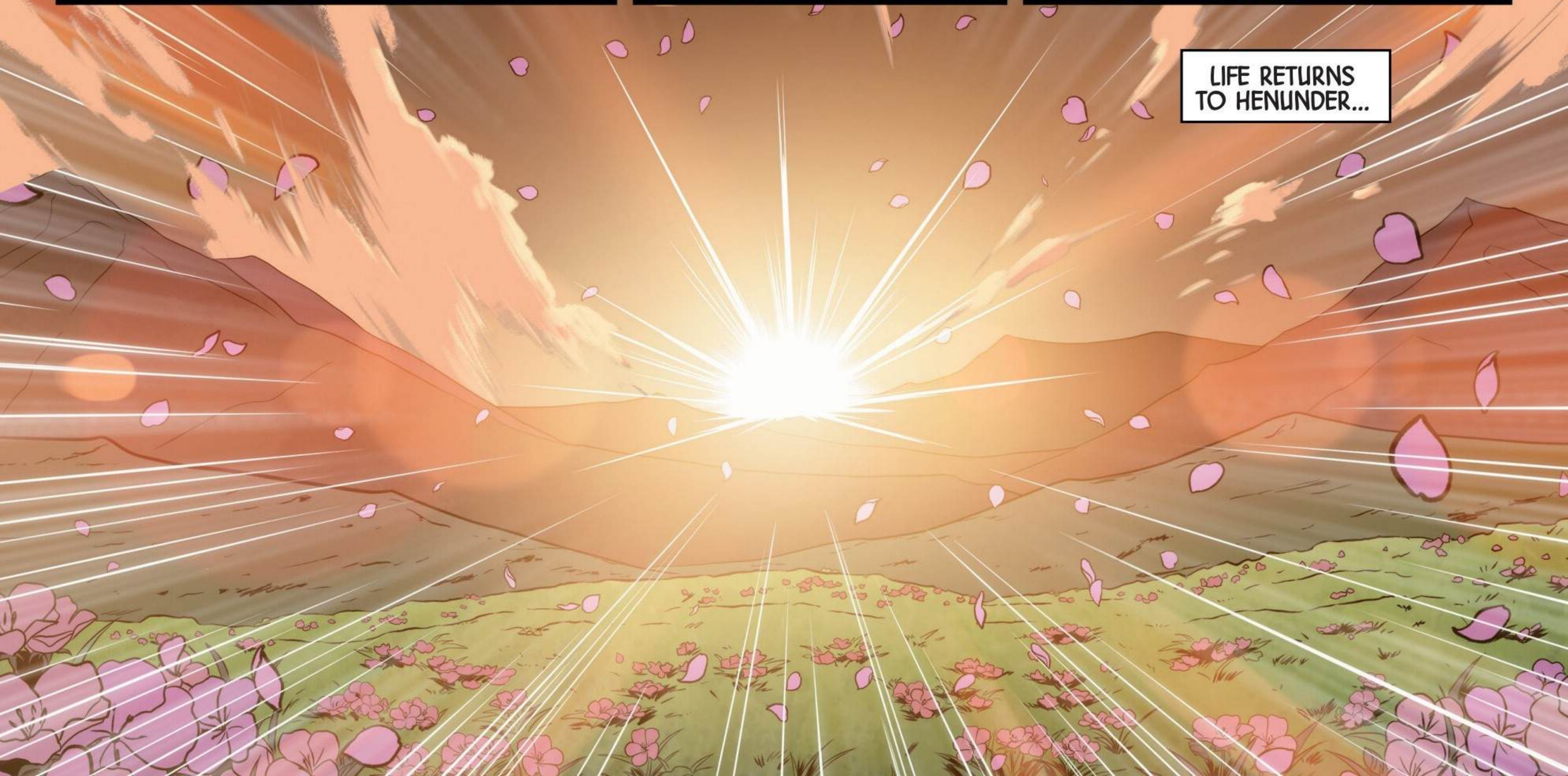


FOR A MOMENT,
SHE FEELS THE
DEADLY COLD
ON HER SKIN...

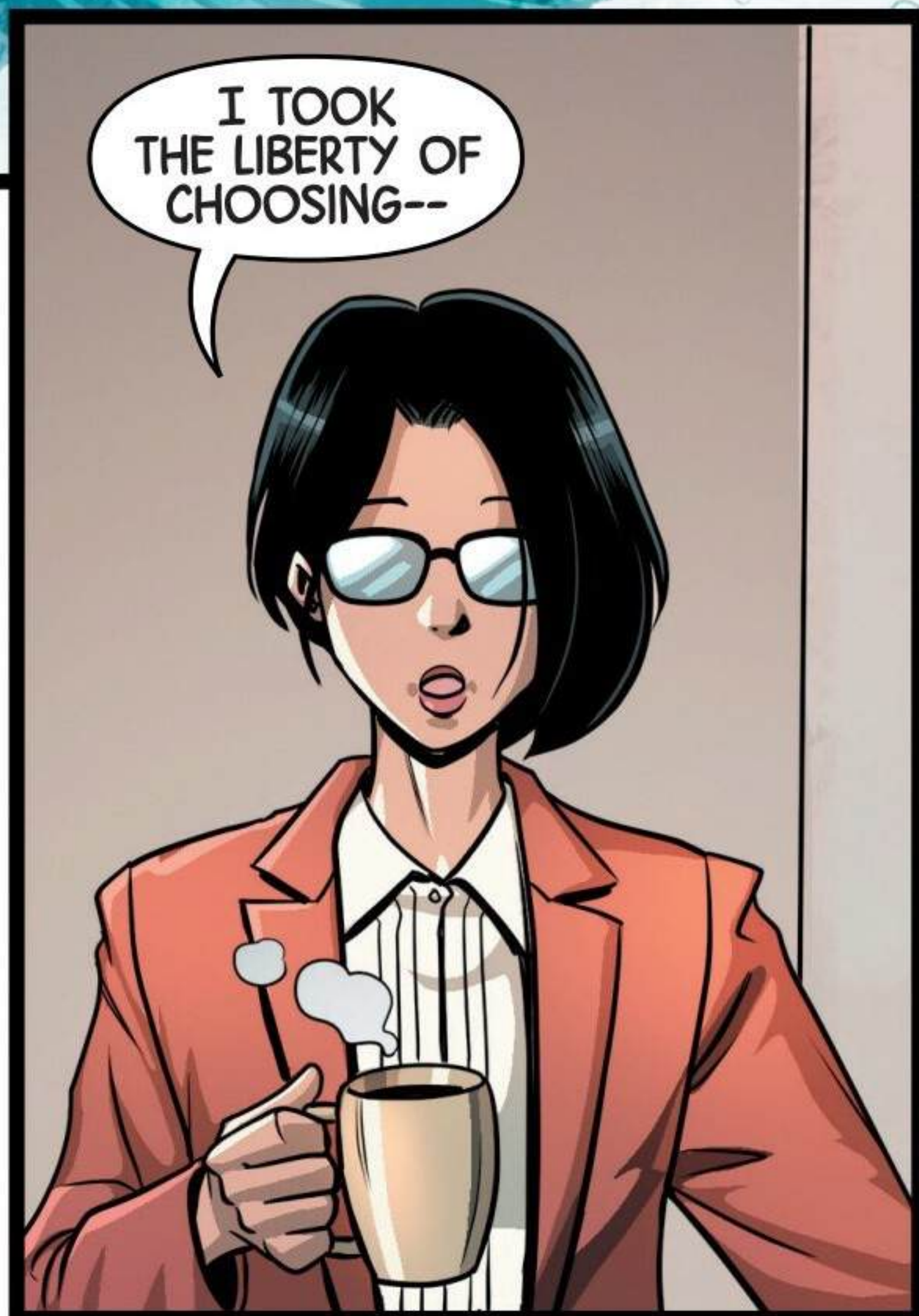
AND
THIS IS YOUR
SUN.



...BUT THEN
THE COLD IS
BANISHED.



LIFE RETURNS
TO HENUNDER...



TWO YEARS AGO.
RUSSIA.
MEDVED PENAL COLONY.

PRISONS

«ALL
RIGHT. WE'RE
HERE.»*

*TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN.

«YOU'D
BETTER BEHAVE
YOURSELF.»

«OR I'LL
BEAT YOU EVEN
WORSE THAN I
DID EARLIER.»

«YOU KNOW
WHY THEY CALL
THIS PLACE *THE
BEAR?*»

«BECAUSE IT
WILL EAT YOU
THE @#\$\$% UP.
NO ONE GETS
OUT.»





<THIS ONE
BROKE INTO THE
POLICE STATION. WAS
GOING THROUGH
OUR FILES.>

<NO
IDENTIFICATION.
BUT HE SURE AS
@#\$\$% SOUNDS
AMERICAN
TO ME.>

<A SPY?
LET'S GET
A LOOK AT
HIM.>



<YOU.
WHAT'S YOUR
NAME?>

ROSS.



THUNDERBOLT
ROSS.



KRAK



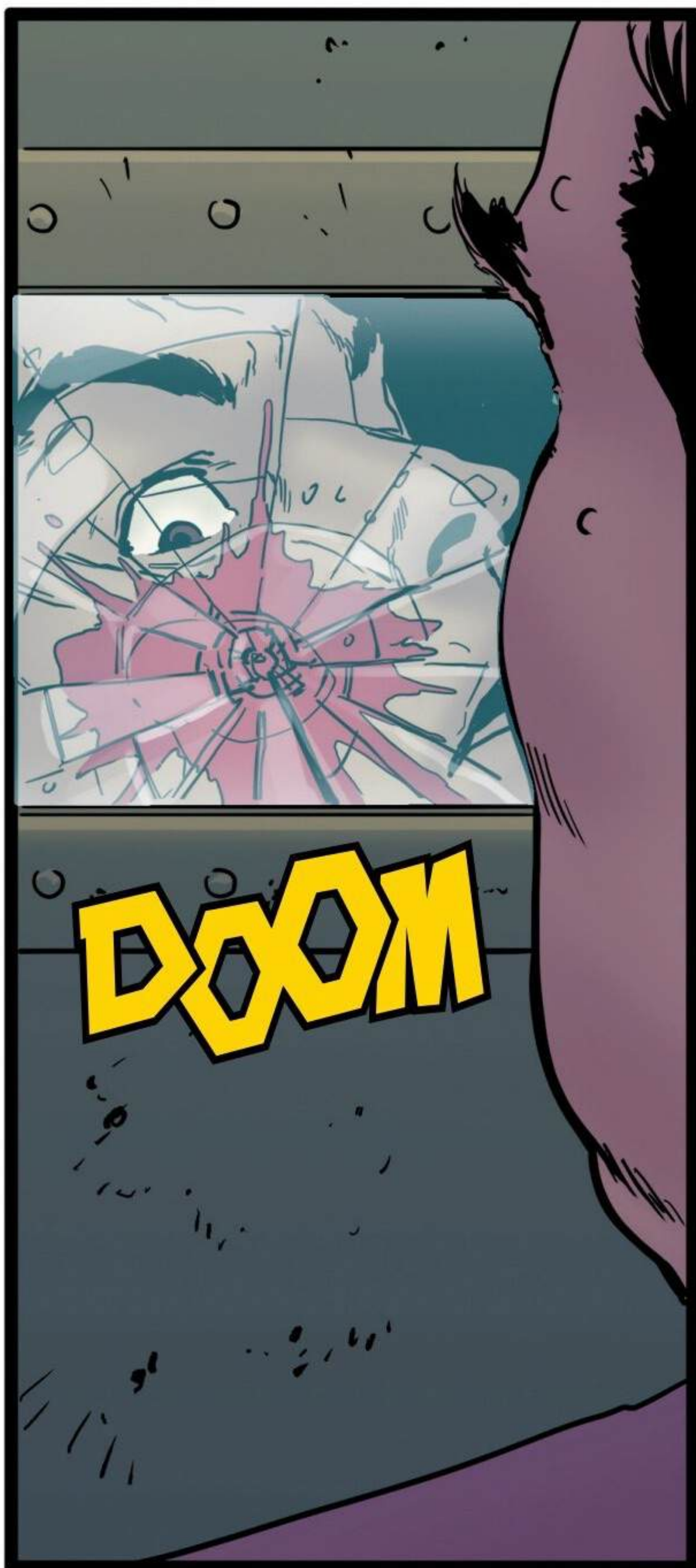
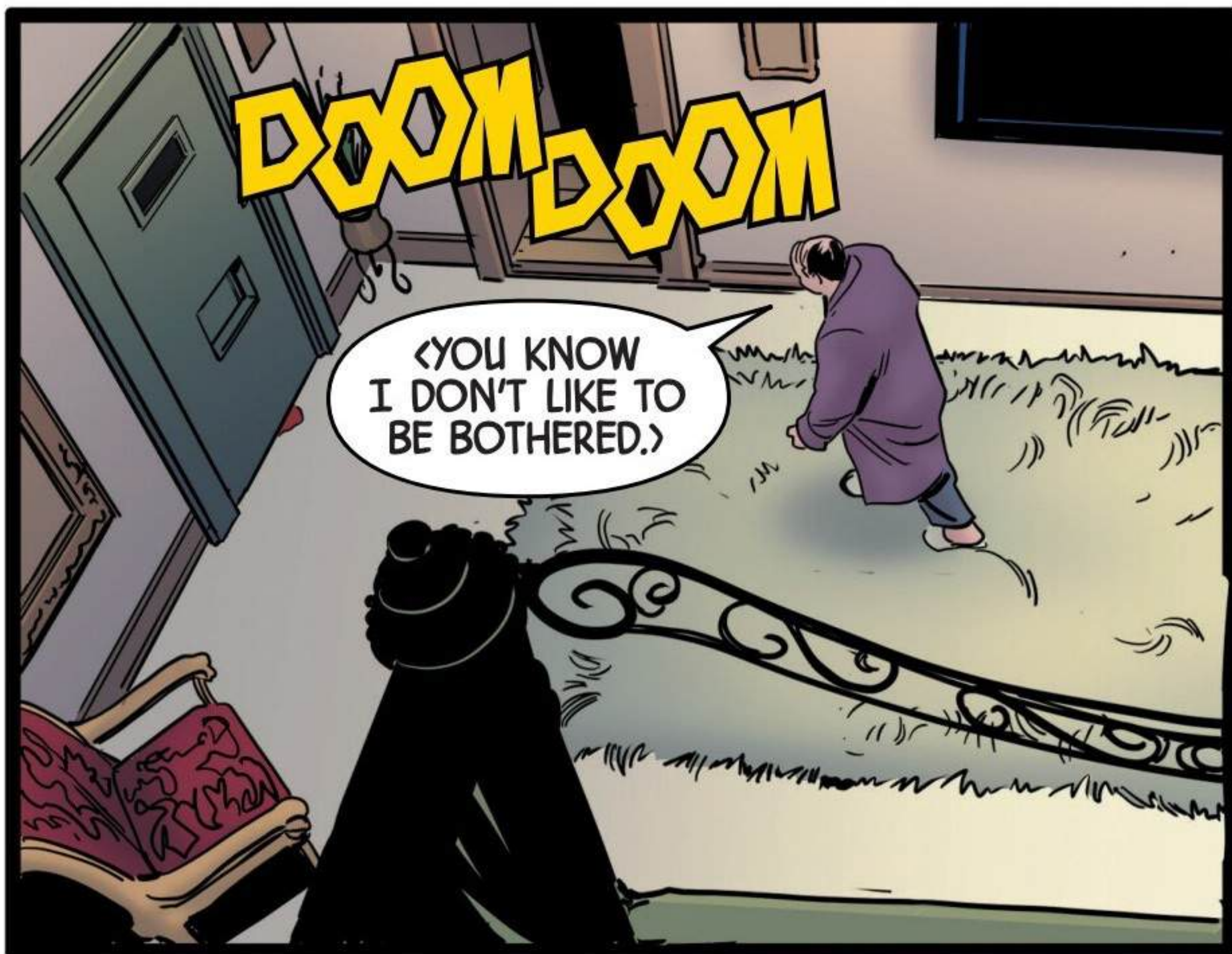
BUT
YOU CAN CALL
ME...

KIK

KIK



...DNNLLKK!







GUSTAV
BULGAR.
ARMS DEALER.
TERRORIST.

PLEASE.

THREE YEARS
AGO, YOU SHOT
DOWN A TRANSPORT
PLANE FULL OF
AMERICAN
SOLDIERS.



TO DE-ESCALATE
TENSIONS WITH
THE WEST, RUSSIA
IMPRISONED
YOU.

PLEASE.

BUT OUR
INTELLIGENCE
MADE IT CLEAR
THAT THIS WAS
A RUSE.



YOUR BUSINESS
AFFAIRS WERE STILL
OPERATIONAL.

PLEASE.

THAT PRISON--
ONE OF THE MOST
IMPENETRABLE IN THE WORLD--
WASN'T KEEPING YOU IN. IT
WAS KEEPING THE REST
OF THE WORLD OUT.



WHAT--
WHAT ARE
YOU?

I AM A
SOLDIER.



NO!
YOU ARE A
MONSTER!

A SOLDIER
HAS WEAPONS.
WHAT YOU
WITNESSED WAS
ONE OF
THEM.



WHY DIDN'T YOU KILL ME BEFORE? IS IT BECAUSE YOU WANT MONEY? I CAN GIVE YOU MONEY.

NO, IT IS BECAUSE I HAVE SOMETHING YOU LACK, MR. BULGAR.

DISCRETION AND HONOR.



I HAVE AVOIDED INTERNATIONAL ESCALATION BY EXTRACTING YOU AND ELIMINATING ALL WITNESSES.



AND WE'RE HERE NOW BECAUSE I WANTED TO LOOK YOU IN THE EYE, MAN TO MAN.

I WANTED US TO HAVE A CONVERSATION.

I WANTED YOU TO KNOW THAT YOU ARE BEING PUNISHED FOR CRIMES AGAINST THE GREATEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD.

BLAM



GOD BLESS AMERICA.

ROSS HAS A COMPLICATED HISTORY WITH THE U.S. MILITARY. A DISGRACED FOUR-STAR GENERAL IN CHARGE OF NO ONE BUT HIMSELF.

THE AIR FORCE HAS ALLOWED HIM CERTAIN LIBERTIES AND DISCRETIONARY FUNDS--AS LONG AS HE KEEPS HIS WORK TO THE SHADOWS.



HE WAS A ONE-MAN OPERATION.

NO ONE KNEW HE WAS HERE.

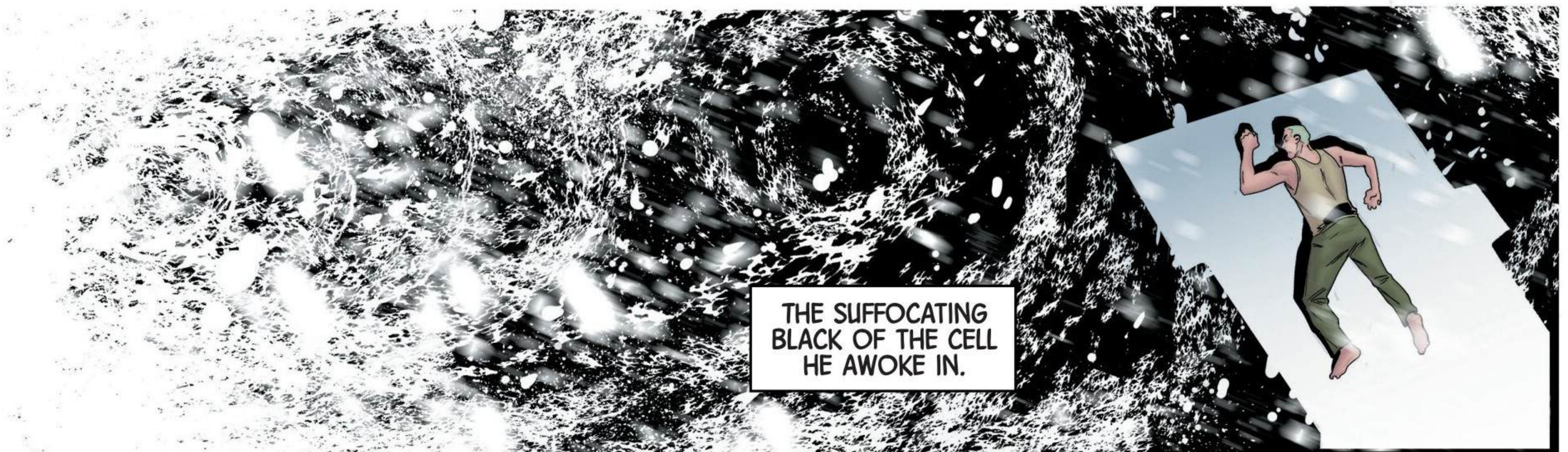


OR SO HE THOUGHT.



HERE WAS NOTHING BUT WHITE.

UNTIL THERE WAS BLACK.



THE SUFFOCATING BLACK OF THE CELL HE AWOKE IN.



HE WASN'T SURE IF THE VOICE WAS IN HIS HEAD. IT SEEMED TO COME FROM ALL AROUND HIM...

RISE, THUNDERBOLT ROSS.



WHERE AM I? WHO ARE YOU?



YOU ARE IN YOUR NEW HOME. IN LATVERIA.

MY HOME IS--AND ALWAYS WILL BE--THE UNITED STATES.



I WOULD ACCEPT NO OTHER RESPONSE FROM ONE OF THE GREAT MILITARY STRATEGISTS AND STAUNCHEST NATIONALISTS.

WHICH IS EXACTLY WHY YOU'RE HERE.



WE HAVE SO, SO MUCH TO TALK ABOUT.

TO BE CONTINUED...

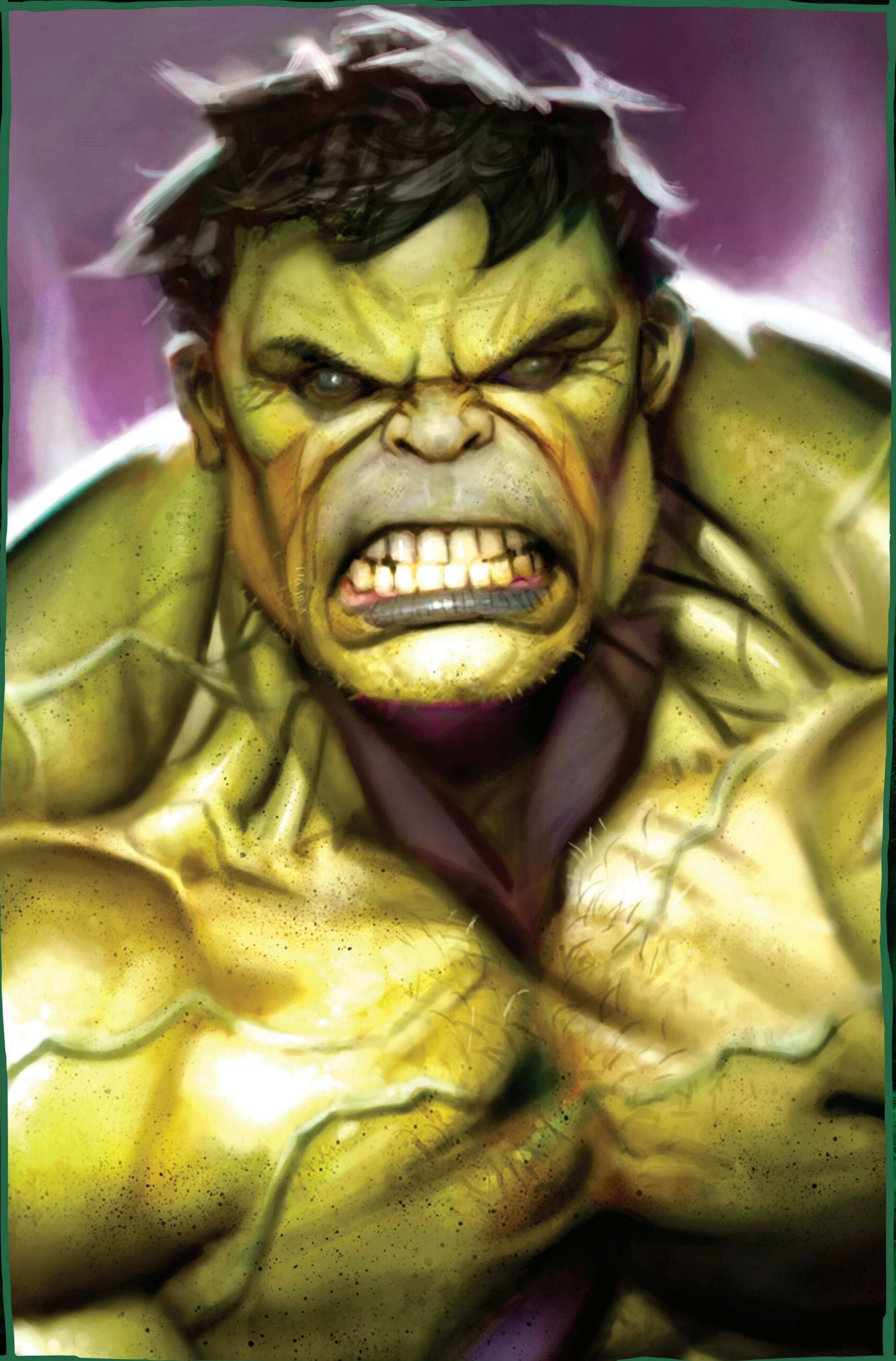
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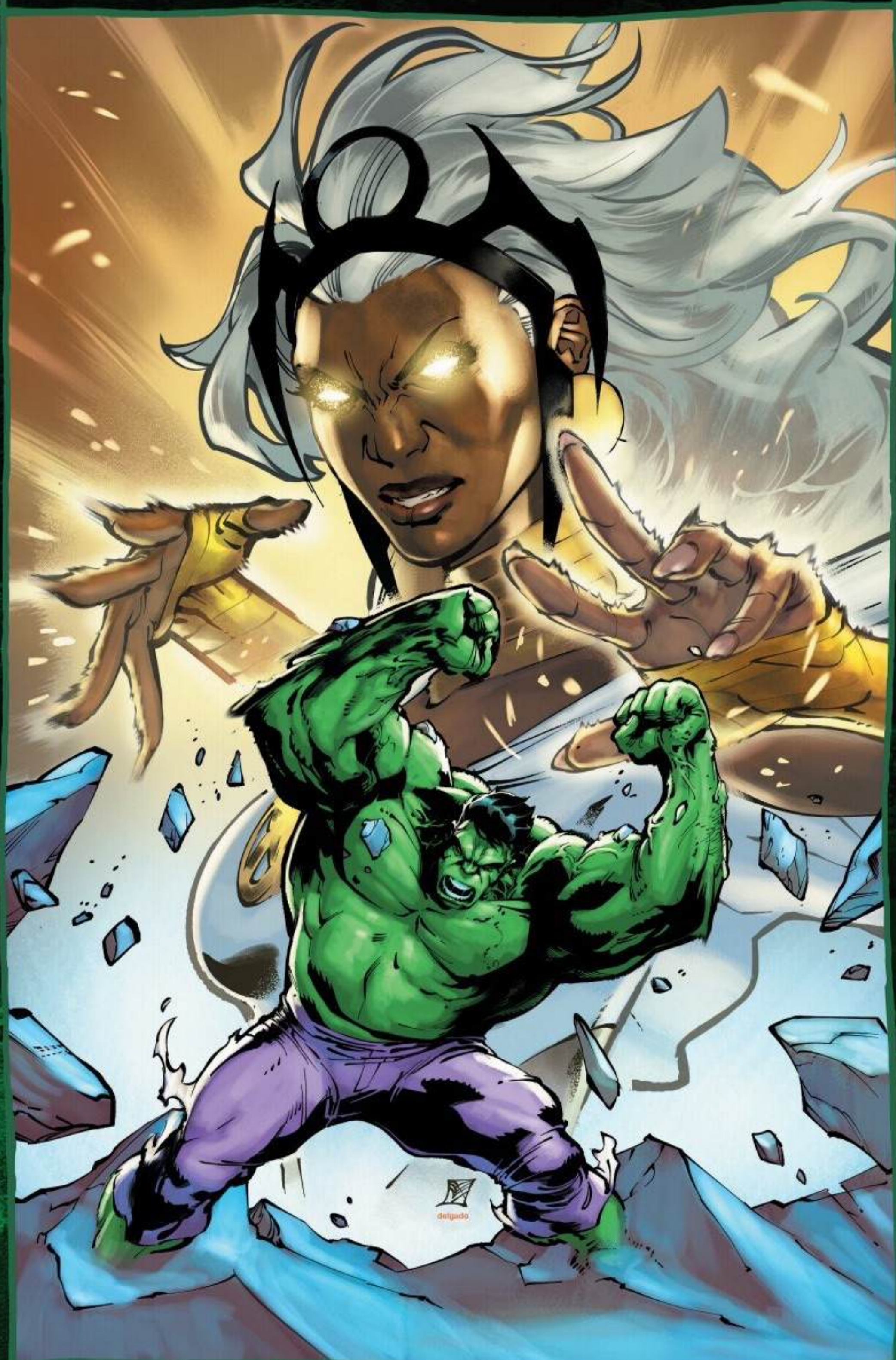
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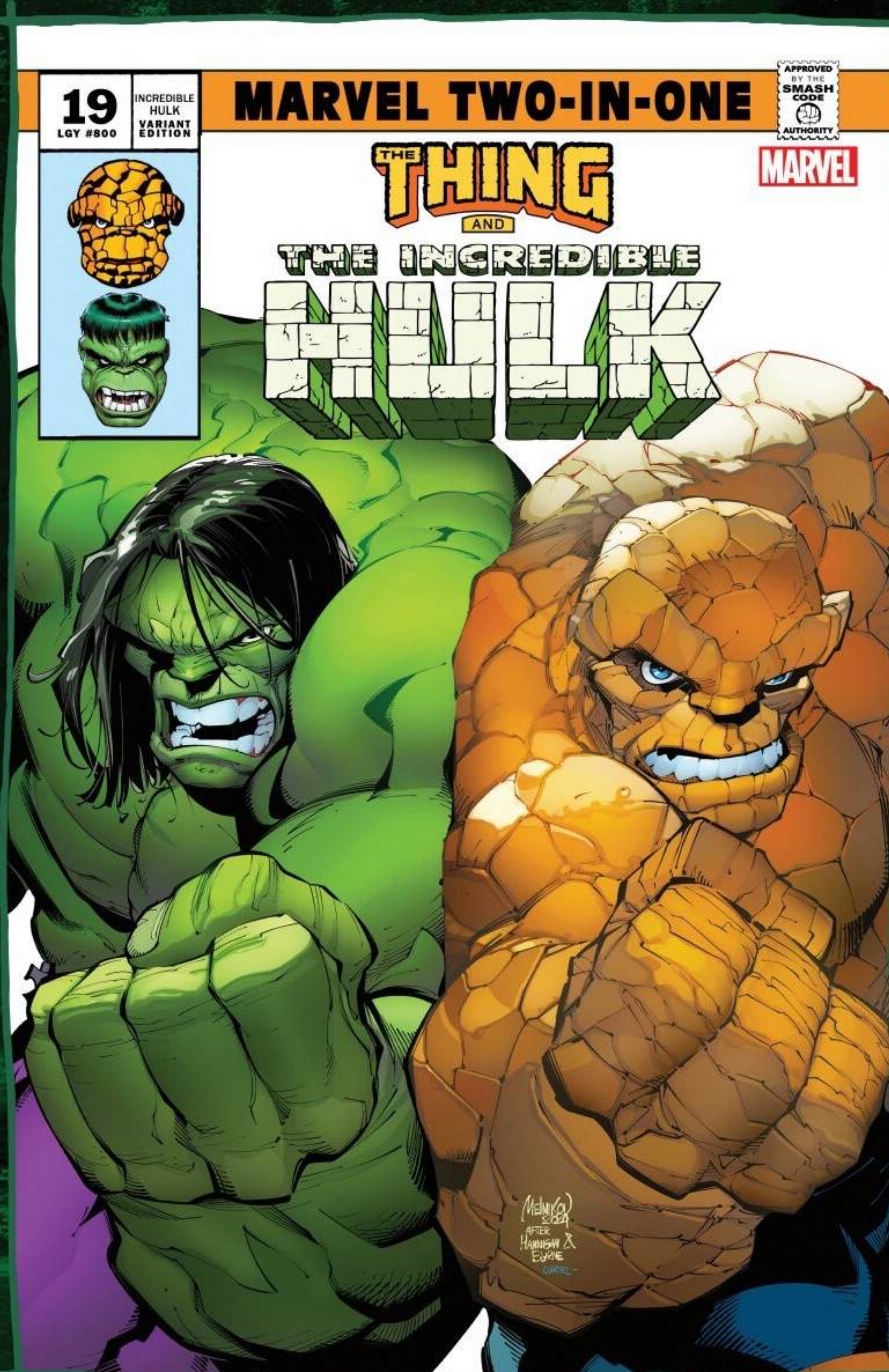
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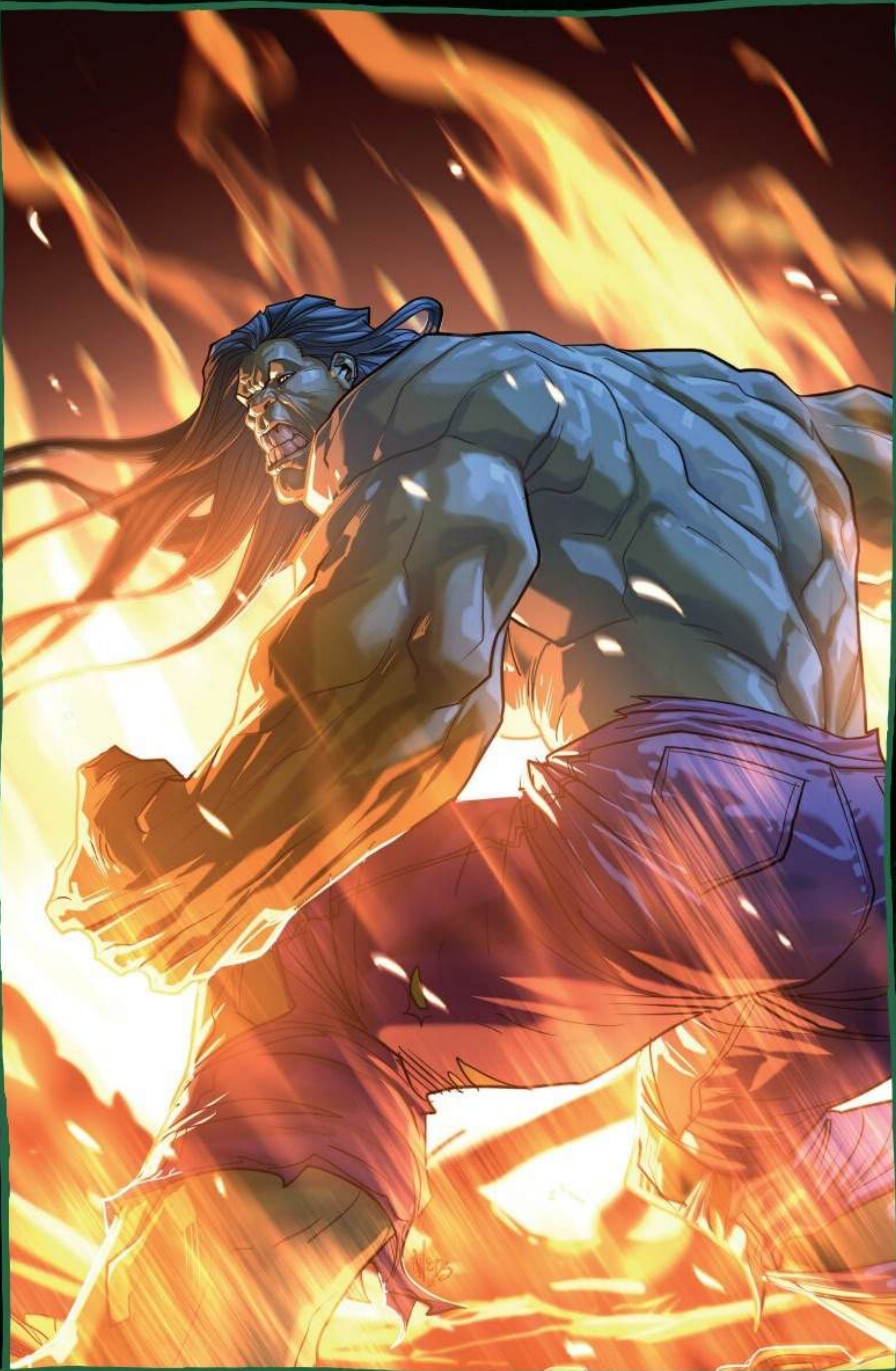
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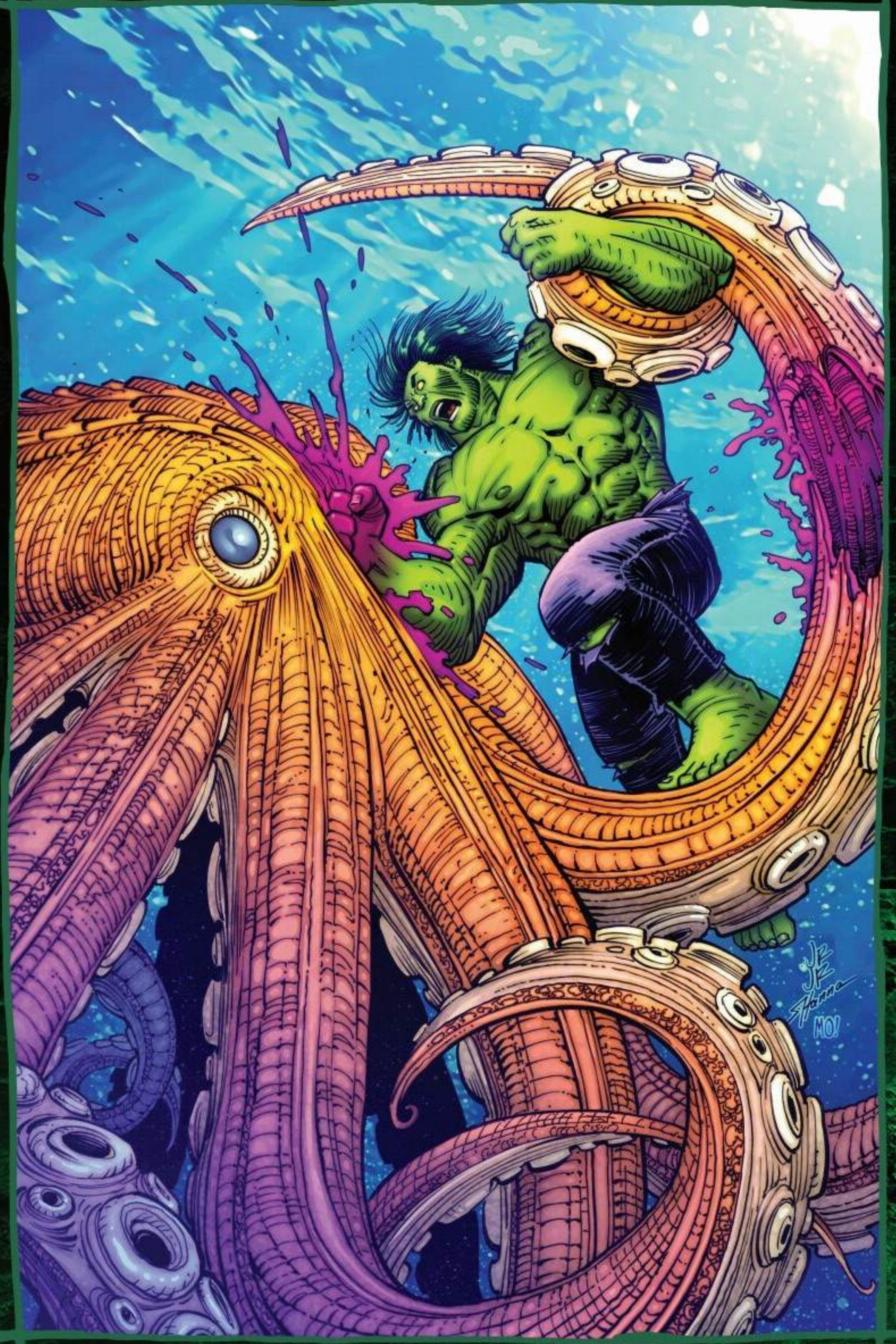
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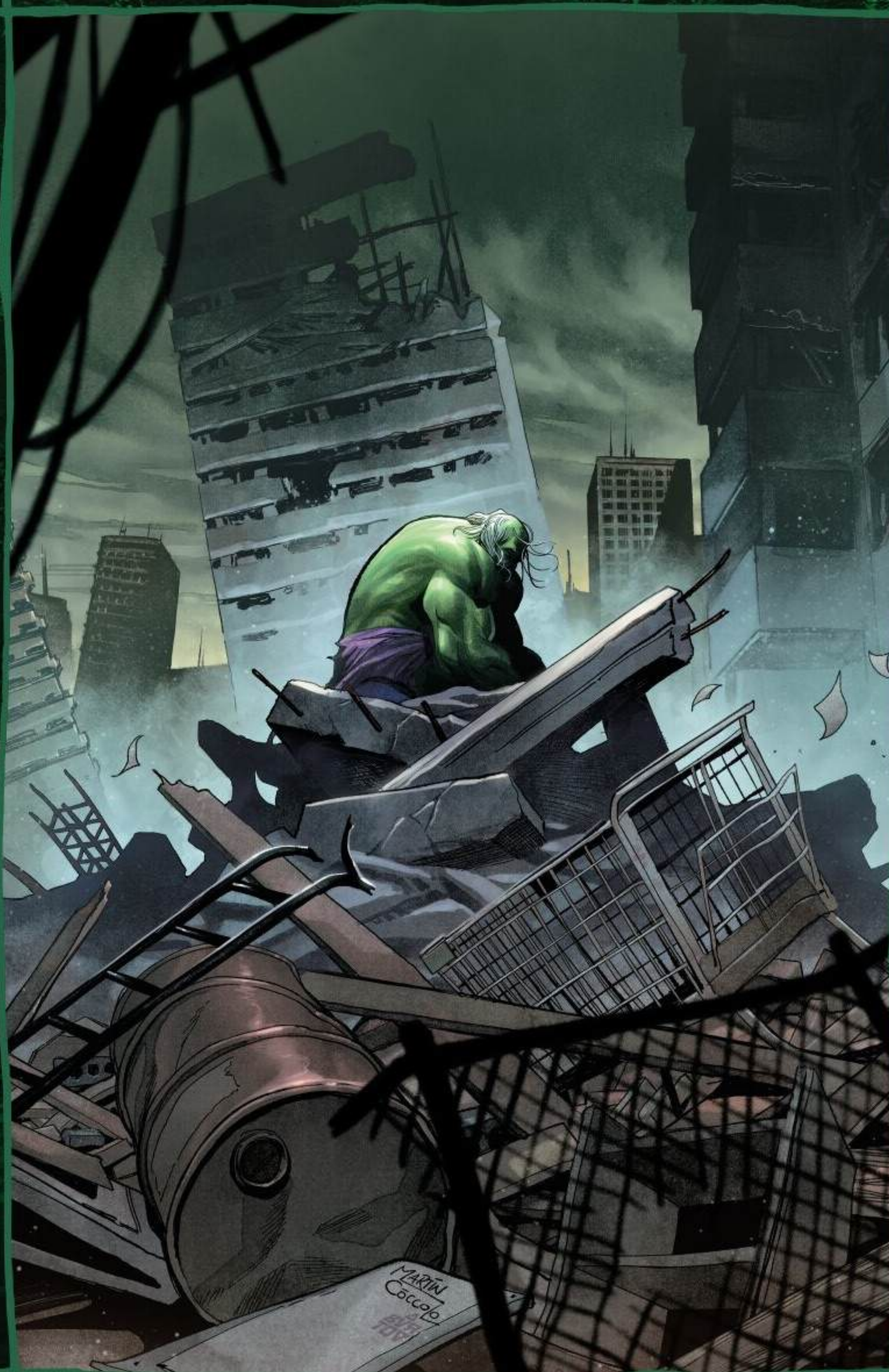
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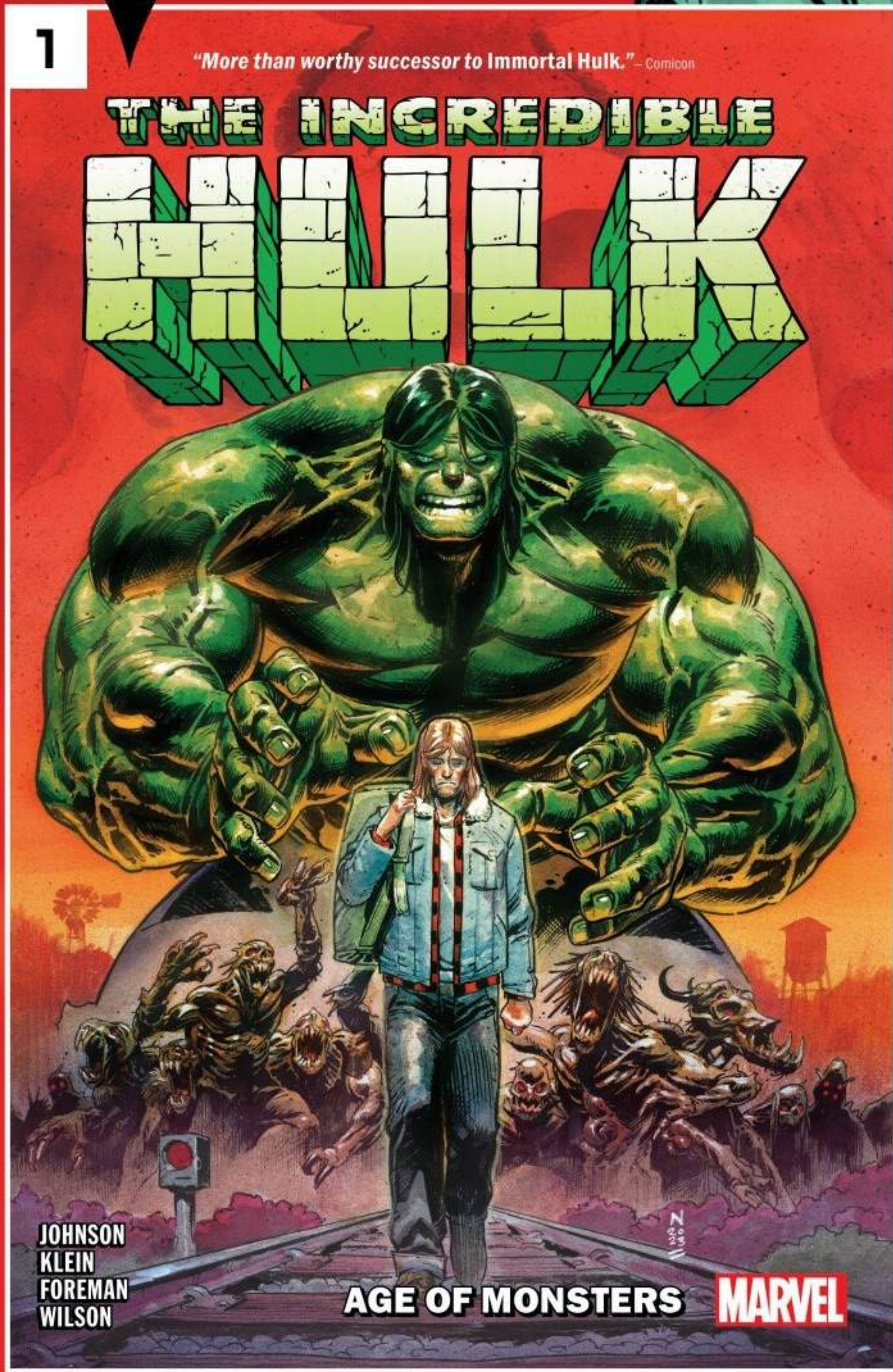
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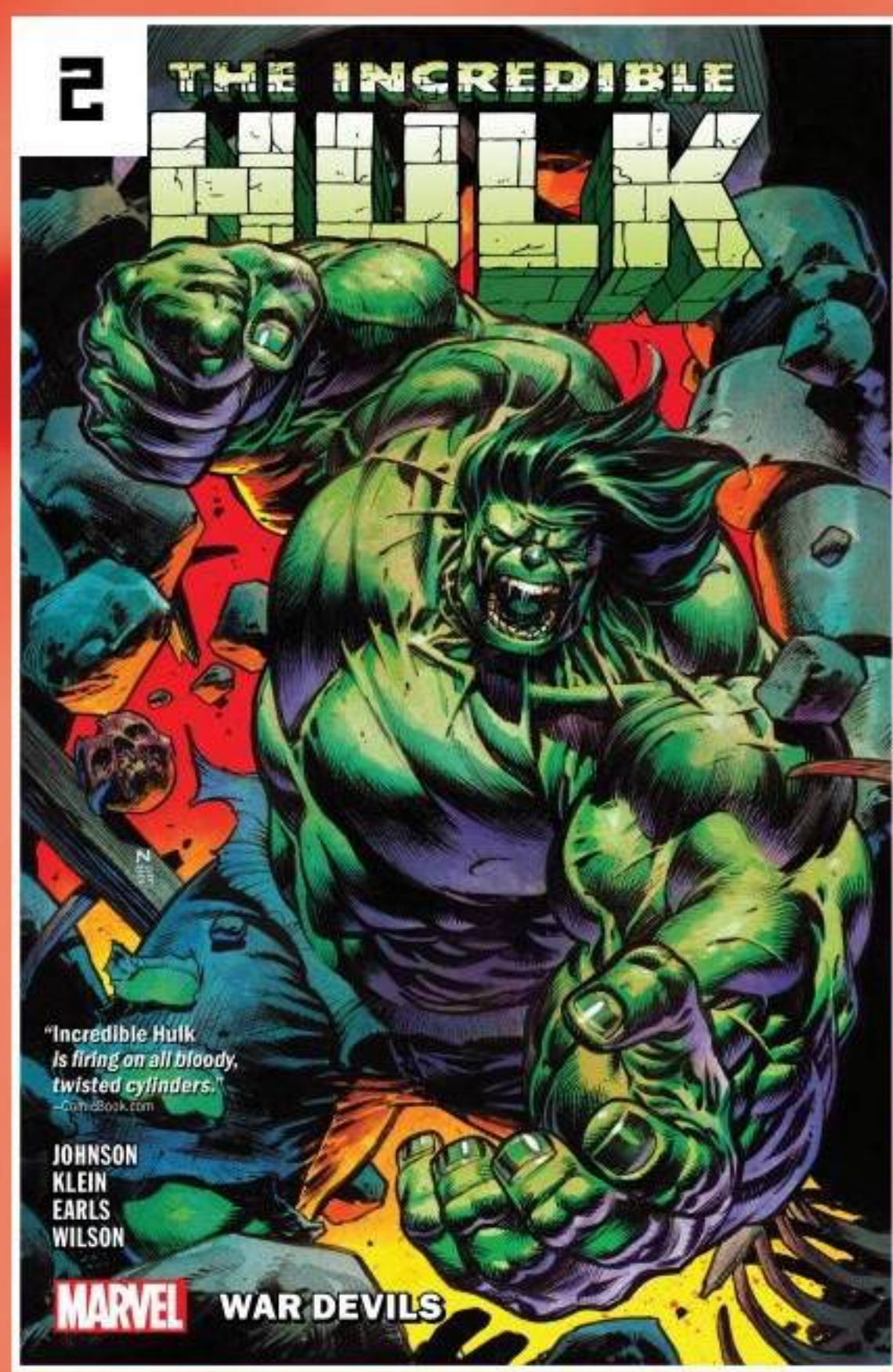


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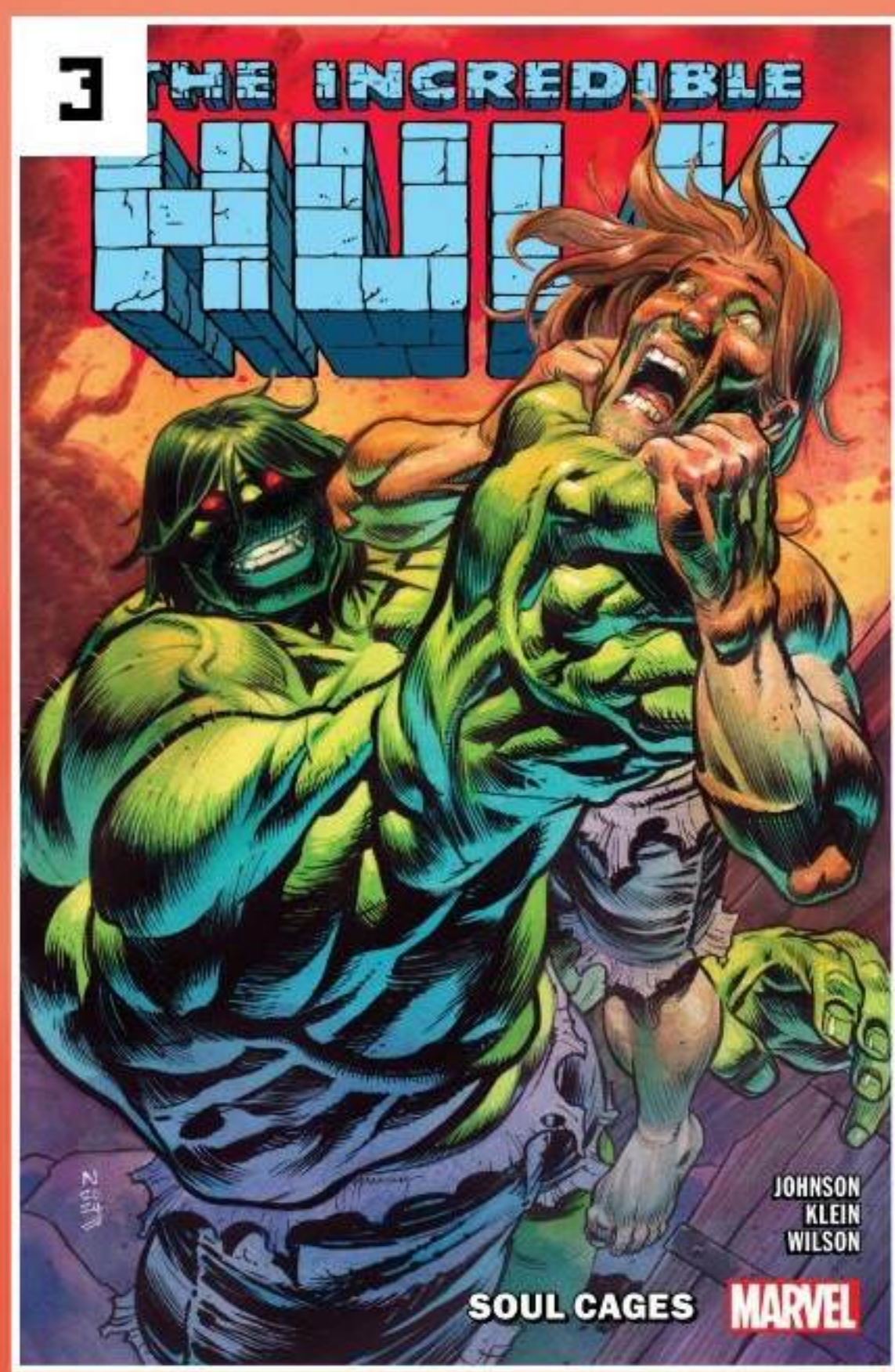
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